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THE CITY

OF THE

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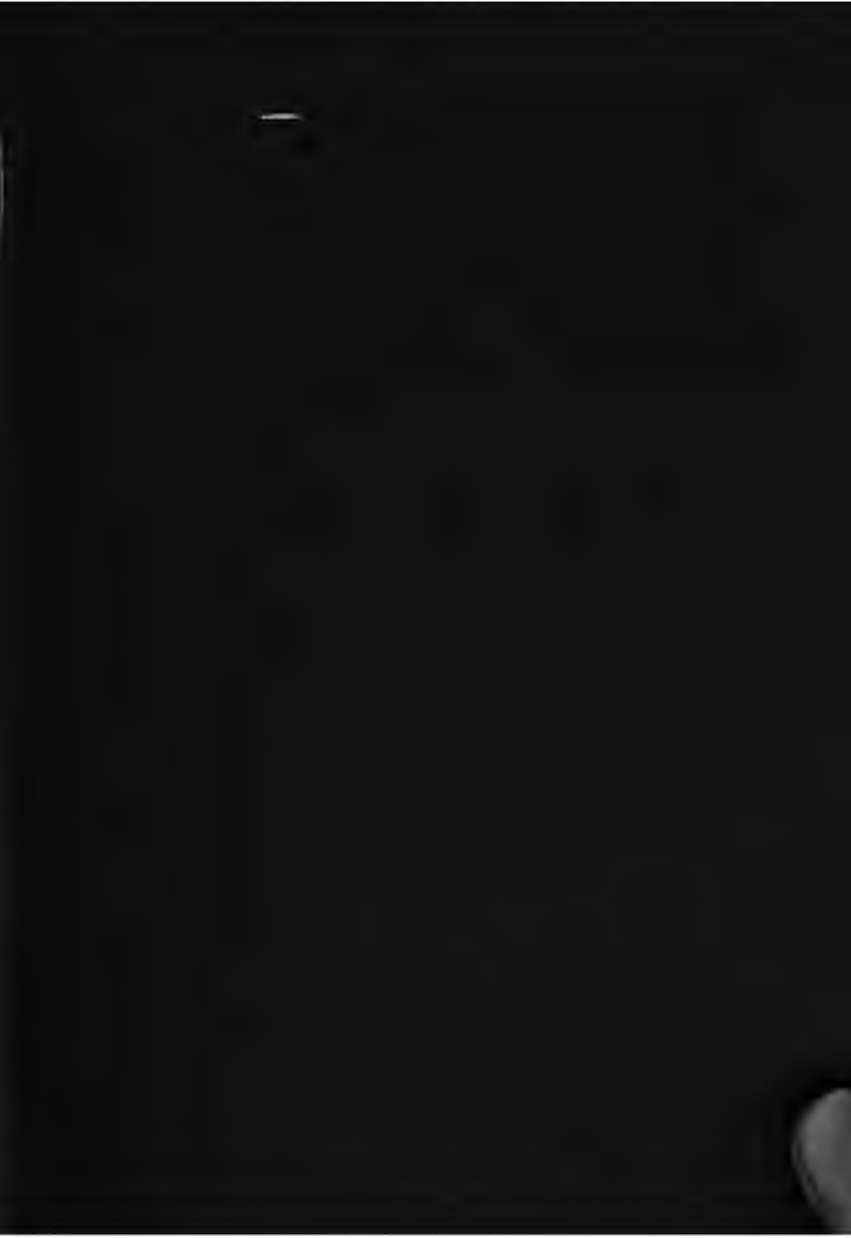
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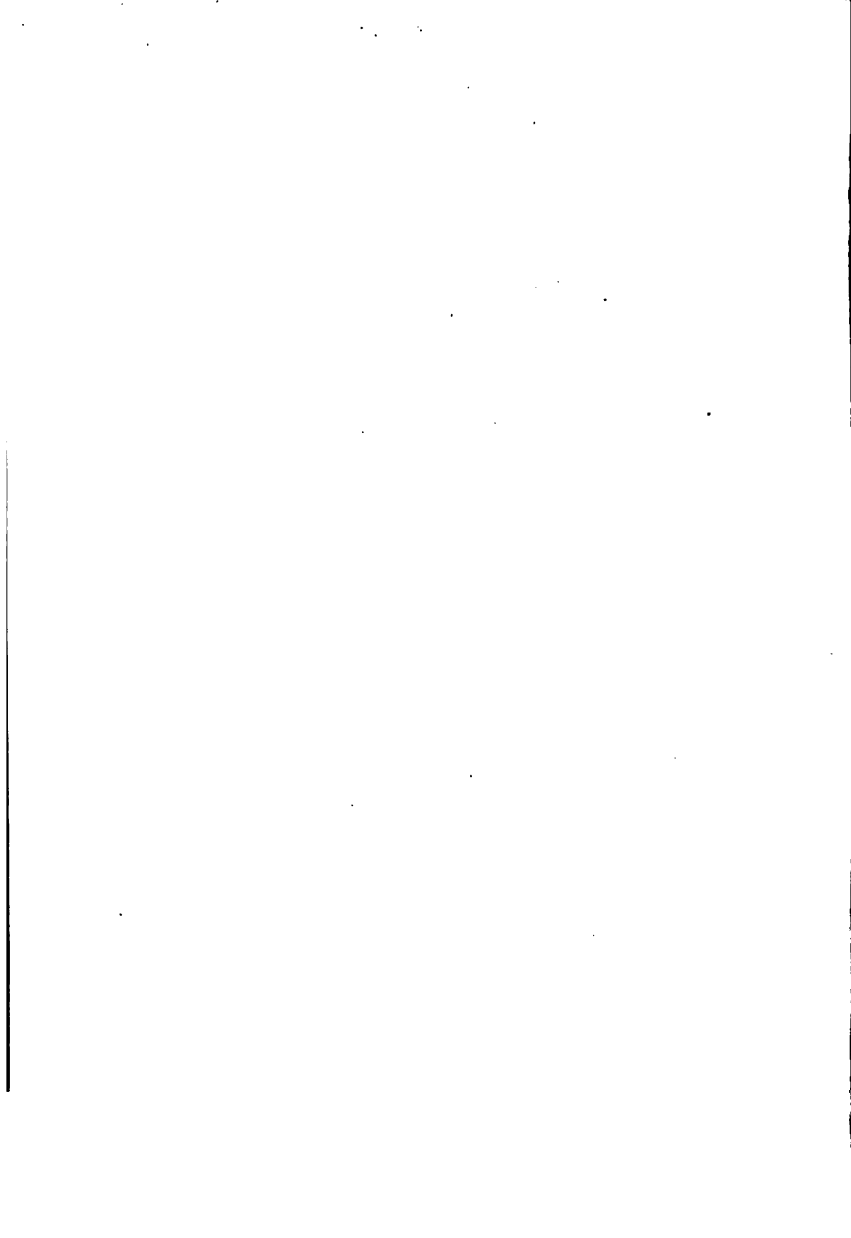
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The
City of the Living God:

A NOTE ON HEBREWS XII. 22-24.

BY

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"THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT,"

"PROMETHEUS, AND OTHER POEMS," ETC.

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PREFACE.



I HAVE tried, in this little book, to embody one thought as to the Church of God—a thought that seems to me fundamental, involved in her very idea, and continually present in the New Testament. It is not the thought of her unity, supremacy, or catholicity, though it contains all these: but what appears to me to be an even more far-reaching and deeper idea. Briefly, it is as follows.

The Church differs from all other possible or actual societies in the fact that she existed before her members. She is not made out of them: they are built into her. Potentially, she existed from the beginning, in the everlasting Word, the first-begotten of all creation. Really, she existed as the Body of that Word, as His “fullness,” as His Bride, from the creation of the first angels or spiritual beings—they were made in Christ, deriving their strength from Him. So she is one, for she springs from the one Head: so she is supreme, for she claims to draw man into his only fitting place in God’s universe: so she is catholic, for every created spirit has been made to take his position in her great unity. She is not a rival to the unity of mankind in Christ, for she is that unity—the organised union of all the spiritual universe in the Body of Christ, by the life of the Spirit, under the law of God.

All other unities are made in History, but the one

Church was before History. As seen in earth, she rests indeed on the Incarnation; but the Incarnation itself rests on the everlasting relation of the Word to Humanity, and, ultimately, so does she. All other unities among men rest on some more or less transient fact in their relations to one another; her unity rests on the nature of man *as man*, as a spiritual being made in God's image, and thereby framed from the beginning as a member of the whole organised living universe that finds its meaning and its centre in the life of Christ Himself.

I have found this view most strongly expressed in the passage from the Epistle to the Hebrews which I have used as a sort of text: but I believe that all the statements in that passage, and any of the deductions I have drawn from it that will bear examination, are simple corollaries of this one fundamental position, that the Church of God is older than man, that the saving work of Christ in her is restorative work, bringing man back to the place in her for which he was made—that, in fact, she embodies in her very essential nature the dream of a universal union of mankind. But her dream is wider and fuller, for it is of a universal brotherhood of mankind as sons of God and as brothers of the hosts of Heaven, because man was made by God to take his place in this brotherhood that existed before man did, as the very root-idea of all creation. So she is the City that hath the foundations—the eternal foundations,—Jerusalem that is above, and ever was above, *the Mother of us all*.

ALEX^R. R. EAGAR.

MANACCAN,
February 1895.

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Προσεληλύθατε Σιών ὄρει καὶ πόλει Θεοῦ ζῶντος,
Ἱεροσολὴμ ἐπογρανίῳ, καὶ μυριάσιν ἀγγέλων παν-
ηγύρει, καὶ ἐκκλησίᾳ πρωτοτόκων ἀπογεγραμμένων
ἐν οὐρανοῖς, καὶ κριτῇ Θεῷ πάντων, καὶ πνεύμασι
δικαίων τετελειωμένων, καὶ διαθήκης νέας μεσίτῃ
Ἰησοῦ, καὶ αἵματι ῥαντισμοῦ κρεῖττον λαλοῦντι παρὰ
τὸν Ἄβελ.

“Ye have come to Sion, Mount and City of the Living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts, even the assemblage of angels, and to the Church of the First-born who are enrolled in the heavens, and to the God of all as Judge, and to spirits of righteous men who have attained their end, and to a Mediator of a new Covenant, even Jesus, and to blood of sprinkling, speaking better than Abel.”



SUMMARY.



Introductory. General idea of Heb. xii. 22-24.

I. *The City of God.* Three different ideas here embodied, all familiar to the readers of the Epistle. (1) Greek idea of the City. Its extension under Stoicism, a system of Phoenician origin, to mankind in general. The Stoic cosmopolitanism. (2) Roman idea—peculiarity of Rome in its relation to the empire. The *civitas*. *Extension* its life-blood. (3) Jewish idea. Jerusalem. Its relation to Israel as a Kingdom, a Revelation, and a Church.

How all these ideas are combined in "The City of God." Contrast with "Babylon."

II. *God's Holy Mountain.* Development of idea of "The Mount of God" among the Jews: first Sinai, then Sion. "The Mountain of the Lord's house" became a name for Israel in its visibility and strength. Our Lord's use of the same idea.

(1) Visibility of the Church. Theory of an invisible Church discussed.

(2) Unity of the Church. Seven arguments that the Church was conceived as a single visible body. Causes of schism. (a) Putting opinions about things before the things themselves. (β) Exaggeration of the importance of intellectual differences. (γ) Failure in the grasp of *history*.

(3) Authority of the Church. Necessarily involved in her idea. Relation to the civil power in Apostolic days, under a united Christendom, and now. Special difficulties of present day: impossibility of absolutely separating civil and ecclesiastical jurisdiction. The questions of education, divorce, and affinity. Direction in which a solution must be sought.

III. *The Living God.* God both immanent and transcendent, but the distinctive doctrines of Christianity rest on the idea of immanence more than of transcendence. Life of God in His Church: the Church a Revelation of God. Marks of this life in her. (1) Her vitality and adaptability:—these shown. (2) Her teaching. God's general plan is to teach by the living voice, and progressively. Development in Old Testament: also in New (shown from relation of St. John's Gospel to Synoptists, from St. Paul's teaching, and from the individual elements, especially Christ's priesthood, in Epistle to Hebrews). Function of the Church in the development of doctrine: effect of division: faults underlying Roman development. Christianity also a Revelation of a vital force: this too is badly affected by division. The Church, in fact, is *living*, with the life of God.

IV. *The Heavenly Jerusalem.* Popular idea of the Heavenly Jerusalem, as embodied in hymns, &c. The name, or the same in effect, common to St. Paul, St. John, and Epistle to Hebrews:—probable reason. In *none* of these is the reference to something that is not on earth. Use of "Heaven" and "Heavenly" in a sense that is not local:—both uses, represented by two different forms (*ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς* and *ἐν οὐρανῷ*), occur in Lord's Prayer:—cf. St. Matthew's "Kingdom of the Heavens." Use of *ἐπουράνιος* in Epistle to Hebrews:—reference to the fundamental argument of the Epistle. This argument stated and explained.

Church Heavenly because (1) not limited to men on earth—extends beyond death. (2) Not limited to men—includes the angels. (3) "The Heavens" include the earth, as the outer court of the Temple, and the Church is one with our High Priest in Heaven. (4) Church rests on realisation of this earth as a part of the Kingdom of the Heavens. The Church is "Heavenly" even on earth.

V. *The Company of Two Armies.* The holy Angels part of the Church. This fact has important results. (1) Our fellow-members in the Church, not merely as ministering to us, but in their own *παιτήριος*. (2) They belong to the "Body of Christ." Christ the ground of Creation, and all spiritual beings made "in Him." Effect of this consideration on the work of the Incarnation. (3) The Angels not a single class, but a vast universe of spiritual beings, differing in nature and function. The titles, &c., of the Angels imply (α) variety, and (β) authority. Cf. authority in Church on earth. Bearing of this on relation of God's will to human authority:—analogy between His methods in earth and Heaven. Analogy as to relation of God's direct will to "forces of nature."

Vast sphere thus given to the Church: but *one* Church in earth and Heaven. (1) One in worship. Evidence of Scripture as to this. (2) One in that a part of the *λειτουργία* of the Angels is ministration to men. Limitation of this ministration.

VI. *The Church of the First-born*. Special difficulties in this clause. Who are the "First-born"? Title elsewhere (except in xi. 28) used in the singular, and of Christ only. He is called *πρωτότοκος* in four different senses. Here a name for others. Who are they? Three possible explanations. (1) The spirits of departed Christians, in contrast to "just men made perfect," who are the spirits of Old Testament worthies. Objections to this interpretation. (2) The assemblage, not yet existent, of *risen* saints. This also improbable. (3) The Church on earth at the time the author wrote his Epistle. Name *πρωτόκοκκων* suggested by *πρωτοτόκια* a little further back:—meaning of the title.

"Enrolled in the Heavens." Connected with "Book of Life," cf. St. Paul and St. John. "Enrolled": reference to Roman census—a register of citizens. This is the Register of the Heavenly City—words mark them as citizens of the Kingdom of the Heavens. Possible reference to Baptism.

"*Church* of the First-born"—precise meaning of the word. The Christian assembly. Have already considered the Church as a Kingdom and a Revelation:—its aspect as a "Church" proper.

Worship of the Church. Relation of worship to the Eucharist—the heavenly Eucharist. Analysis of idea of Eucharist as (1) Sacrifice, and (2) Feast. Two questions discussed: (α) Is the Eucharist confined to the Church on earth? Relation of angelic worship to it. (β) Relation of non-Eucharistic (non-Church) worship to Eucharist.

VII. *The Great Judge*. Not a reference to Day of Judgment. True translation—"The God of all as Judge." *Κριτής* here = Ruler. God Ruler in a special sense in the Church. Church as the organised union of mankind as God's creature, under God's Law.

(1) "Establishment"—relation of Church and State.

(2) Lesson to the world, of God's Rule. Evidential value of the Church in her vitality and continued existence.

(3) So too in her mutability. This an evidence of life. Consequences:—

(α) Unity embodied in conception of Church.

(β) Her unity in History—her present living voice.

(γ) God's dealings with men as National. Idea of National Branches. Church of England—Eastern Churches. National differences contrasted with Sectarianism.

(δ) Power of Church for this life too: Church and social problems.

VIII. *Righteous Men made perfect.*

(1) Who are the *δίκαιοι*? The Old Testament worthies. This proved from context, and from use of word in New Testament.

(2) How can they be said to be "made perfect"? The dead not yet perfect. Real meaning of word. Meaning of *τέλος*. *Τέλος* of Old Testament saints, as shown in the eleventh chapter of Epistle:—their attainment of this *τέλος* in Christianity. (A grammatical objection briefly discussed.) Communion of Saints implied.

(3) Not spoken of in terms that mark their organised unity. Probable reason. The Intermediate State. How this—

(a) Throws light on Evolution of Church.

(β) Shows the essentially progressive nature of the Intermediate State.

(γ) Enables us to teach the *necessity* of the Church, without *harsh judgment of those outside*.

IX. *The Mediator of the New Covenant.* (1) Mediation, in general and in Epistle to Hebrews. (2) *Διαθήκη*—its meaning. The "Berith"—its sacrifice, and meaning of this. (3) Covenant called *νέα*—*νέος* and *καινός*: meaning.

(1) Church as City of the Covenant. What this is. (2) The living Christ as Mediator. (3) Covenant in Christ God's original purpose. (4) Essentially includes Church. (5) All leads up to the living Christ. Unity of Church in Him. Her visible and perfect unity desired. An Indictment of Sectarianism. What a united Church would be and do.

THE CITY OF THE LIVING GOD.



INTRODUCTION.

“A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid.”

THE Epistle to the Hebrews is the nearest approach to a theological treatise in the New Testament. It is not, indeed, devoid of those elements that distinguish an Epistle from a Dissertation: it bears the message of an individual writer to an individual Church, it is not absolutely confined to one definite subject, and it diverges from its main line of argument into miscellaneous counsels and notes on points of local or personal interest. But it is yet so far a treatise that it is mainly concerned with one theme, which is expanded in an orderly manner and treated with minuteness and wealth of illustration; and all its other contents are subsidiary to this. This subject is the relation between Judaism and Christianity; and so full is the treatment, and so complete the exposition thus given of Christian theology, that the Nicene Creed would have been shorn of only a very few of its less important details if its authors had been entirely

restricted for their theological definitions and evidences to this one Epistle.

And just as the Epistle to the Hebrews is the nearest New Testament equivalent to a theological treatise, so the passage from that Epistle that appears on the forefront of this book is the nearest approach, within the same limits, to a definition of the Christian Church. St. Paul indeed, in one famous passage, defines the *unity* of the Church in forcible language, and his Epistle to the Colossians is largely a treatise on the relation of the Church to Christ. In the great Doxology in the Epistle to the Ephesians, he attributes glory to God "in the Church and in Christ Jesus, throughout all the generations of the age of the ages," thus naming the Bride in one breath with her Spouse, and giving her a share in His eternal glory. In many other passages he defines, stroke by stroke, the comprehensiveness, organisation, and authority of the Church of God: but he does so *πολυμέρως καὶ πολυτρόπως*. Nowhere, except in this one passage, can we find any attempt at defining the Church by its contents, and stating its dignity and power by the enumeration of all that is included in the idea.

And very wonderful are those contents, the bounds of "Sion, Mount and City of God." They fill all earth, but they stretch beyond earth into heaven. Its citizens include, in a manner on the same footing, the "innumerable hosts" of angels, and the whole body of the faithful, on earth and beyond; and, in a strange and not directly intelligible order, God Himself, Jesus the Mediator, and the Blood of His Sacrifice, appear within the bounds of the everlasting kingdom. So the Heavenly Jerusalem out-comprehends Heaven and

Paradise and Earth ; its dominion extends beyond the grave ; its polity is the "wonderful order" in which God has ordained and constituted the services of angels and of men.

Now what was the Church of which he who wrote this Epistle spoke so great things? An invisible body, unorganised and without outward form, whose members are known only to God? A congeries of independent societies, each with an organisation separate from and often inconsistent with its fellows? A society, bearing an outward existence and a visible form, organised in obedience to some supreme law of God? And what were his ideas as to the power and lawful position of the Church, howsoever it was constituted? Our purpose is to examine his definition, clause by clause, and to find what light it throws on these far-reaching questions. For we suppose it can hardly be doubted either that the Apostolic writers had some sound knowledge as to what their Master meant by His Church, or that, if He had an intention and they have left it on record, our best wisdom is to follow Him and them, rather than to strike out a new Christian polity for ourselves, different from and perhaps even inconsistent with His design.

But if we desire to understand the idea that was in the mind of him who wrote the Epistle to the Hebrews, we must understand the general method of both his thoughts and the thoughts of those to whom he wrote. His own thoughts would give a general shape to his idea ; theirs would necessitate his putting his idea into a form that they would readily understand.

First of all, he was a Jew writing to Jews : but a Jew who had thoroughly assimilated Christianity

writing to Jews whose Christianity stood in some danger of retrogression to the non-permanent elements of Judaism. From this point of view, his plan is to show to his readers that Christianity includes and out-comprehends the Jewish system. When therefore he writes of "the City of God," it is with some thought of the sacred city of Jerusalem, "a fair place and the joy of the whole earth." This is the first thought that goes to the shaping of his great picture of God's Church.

But this is not all. He himself certainly was, and his readers seem to have been, well versed in Greek philosophic thought. Right through the Epistle, Aristotle's favourite words are in perpetual contact with Plato's greatest ideas; and it is in a Platonic conception that he finds the means of interpreting the relation of Judaism to Christianity. But it is almost more certain that he was well acquainted with that remarkable development called Stoicism, in which an infusion of foreign speculation enabled Greeks to look beyond the narrow bounds of their own civic life, and to carry out their great central thought of citizenship into the realisation of man's duty as a "citizen of the world." This conception of the city, which is partly Greek and partly Phoenician, was, as we shall see presently, the second factor in his definition.

But he had another idea of citizenship even more immediately under his eyes. He and his readers were Roman subjects, and the Roman doctrine of the *civitas* contained important elements that were wanting in either of the others. These too, as we shall see, entered into his conception of the City of God.

Lastly, there seems reason to believe that he was

acquainted with our Lord's Sermon on the Mount : "that holiness, without which none shall see the Lord," seems an echo of our Lord's Beatitude pronounced on "the pure in heart." Thus it is at least possible that, when he speaks of "Sion, Mount and City of God," our Saviour's words re-echoed in his mind, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid."

Thus, from every point of view, his words would imply to himself and call up to his readers the idea of a definite society, with an organised life; and the successive clauses of his definition enlarge this idea, until his society is seen to contain members visible and invisible, in Earth and Heaven and the Paradise of God. It is visible, in that it is God's kingdom on Earth, but invisible, in that it has members beyond the Earth and that its King and Judge is the Lord of Heaven. Visible, in the length and breadth of the Heavenly City let down from Heaven to Earth; invisible, in the third dimension of that mystic Jerusalem, which rises to the unknown heights of God.

This is the Sion of which we who call ourselves Catholic Churchmen are citizens, and these words of the Epistle to the Hebrews are among our most precious title-deeds. Our intention is to examine them clause by clause and line by line, if haply we may find some of our privileges that we do not always think of, and of our duties that we do not always remember, in the consideration of our position as fellow-citizens with the saints, fellow-servants with the angels—yea, best of all, fellow-heirs with Christ, the King of that Jerusalem which is above, and is free, and is the mother of us all.

NOTE ON THE NICENE CREED AND THE EPISTLE TO THE HEBREWS.

The definitely dogmatic character of this Epistle affords a strong reason for the close consideration of any full and careful definitions contained in it. In illustration of this dogmatic character, it is pointed out in the text that it would be possible to almost entirely reconstruct the Nicaeo-Constantinopolitan Creed from this Epistle alone. The following comparison of the Creed in detail with passages from the Epistle will show how far this is true. The words in brackets are not represented in the Epistle.

I believe in one God. Assumed throughout, as the foundation of Judaism.

The Father [*Almighty*]. Of Christ: "I will be to Him a Father," i. 5. Of men: "What son is he whom the Father chasteneth not?" xii. 7. "The Father of spirits," xii. 9.

Maker of [*heaven and earth, And of*] *all things, [visible and invisible]*. "He that built all things is God," iii. 4.

And in one Lord Jesus Christ. "Our Lord," vii. 14.

The only-begotten Son of God. "By inheritance;" "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee;" "The first begotten," i. 4-6.

Begotten of His Father before all worlds. As above; also, "Having neither beginning of days, nor end of life; but made like unto the Son of God," vii. 3.

God of God, Light of Light, [Very God of very God], Begotten, [not made]. "The brightness of His Father's glory, and the impress of His substance," i. 3.

Being of one substance with the Father: i. 3.

By whom all things were made. "Through whom also He made the worlds," i. 2. "Thou, Lord, at the beginning didst lay the foundations of the earth; and the heavens are the works of Thy hands," i. 10. "This man was counted, &c., as he who hath builded the house," iii. 3. "Christ as a son over his own house," iii. 6. Cf. also, "Upholding all things by the word of His power," i. 3.

Who for us men, and for our salvation came down from heaven. "He became the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him," v. 9.

And was incarnate [by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary], And was made man. "As the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also Himself took part of the same," ii. 14. "In all things it behoved Him to be made like unto His brethren," ii. 17.

And was crucified also for us [under Pontius Pilate], He suffered [and was buried]. "For the suffering of death," ii. 9. "When He had by Himself purged our sins," i. 3. "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself withoutspot unto God, purge your conscience, &c.?" ix. 14. "To put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself," ix. 26. "The offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all," x. 10. See also x. 12, 14; xii. 2; xiii. 12.

And [the third day] He rose again [according to the Scriptures]. "The God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus," xiii. 20.

And ascended into heaven. "He entered in once into the holy place," ix. 12. "Christ is not entered into . . . but into heaven itself," ix. 24. See also iv. 14.

And sitteth on the right hand of the Father. "Sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high," i. 3.

"Sit on My right hand," i. 13. See also viii. 1; x. 12; xii. 2.

And He shall come again [with glory to judge both the quick and the dead]. "Unto those that look for Him shall He appear the second time," ix. 28. "Yet a little while, and He that shall come will come, and will not tarry," x. 37.

Whose kingdom shall have no end. "Thy throne . . . is for ever and ever," i. 8. "Thou art the same, and Thy years shall not fail," i. 12. "He ever liveth to make intercession for them," vii. 25.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost. "Gifts of the Holy Ghost," ii. 4. "The Spirit of grace," x. 29. "The Eternal Spirit," ix. 14.

[The Lord and Giver of life.] Not directly mentioned.

[Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son.] Not mentioned.

[Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified.] A natural inference from ix. 14.

Who spake by the Prophets. "God . . . spake . . . by the prophets," i. 1. "Wherefore (as the Holy Ghost saith,) To-day, &c.," iii. 7. "The Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that He said, &c.," x. 15.

And I believe one Catholick [and Apostolick] Church. "Ye are come to Mount Zion . . . and the Church of the first-born, &c.," xii. 22-24.

I acknowledge one Baptism [for the remission of sins]. "The doctrine of baptisms," vi. 2. "Our bodies washed with pure water," x. 22.

And I look for the Resurrection of the dead. "Of resurrection of the dead," vi. 2. "That they might obtain a better resurrection," xi. 35.

And the life of the world to come. "Here have

we no continuing city, but we seek one to come," xiii. 14.

It will be observed that, (1) in accordance with the general plan of the Epistle, the articles as to the Father are lightly touched; they are assumed as the common ground of Judaism and Christianity. (2) *All* the articles in the Creed concerning our Lord are represented in the Epistle, though not all with equal fullness. (3) The following points, in that part of the Creed which relates to our Lord, are omitted: (*a*) certain definite biographical facts; (*β*) the statement that His Resurrection was "according to the Scriptures;" (*γ*) His office as Judge, though the judgment itself is recognised in several passages. (4) The Deity and worship of the Holy Ghost are not directly mentioned, nor is there even a suggestion of the great doctrine of His Procession. His Deity may, however, be fairly inferred from the language of the Epistle, and the fact that He "spake by the Prophets" is prominently brought before us. (5) The minor articles can all be directly supported from the Epistle, except that (naturally enough in a work of the Apostolic age) the Church is not defined as Apostolic, nor is Baptism stated to be "for the remission of sins."

It is, however, a very striking fact, and one that indicates both the largeness of the scope of the Epistle and its effect on Christian doctrine, that, with these slight exceptions, it would be possible to reconstruct the great confession of the Christian Faith from this single treatise.

CHAPTER I.

THE CITY OF GOD.

"A citizen of no mean city."

THREE streams, flowing from very different sources, meet in one great river. Three ideas, widely dissimilar in their origin, but having a curious analogy with one another, unite to form the conception of "the City of God," as set forth in the Epistle to the Hebrews. One is philosophic, though with a political element in it also, and comes from Greek thought. The second is political, and for its development we must look to the ancient mistress of the world, Rome. The third is religious, and is a central idea of Judaism. And all three, the city of the Greek, the city of the Jew, and the city of the Roman, have contributed elements to the conception of the City of God.

(1) Let us first examine the Greek idea. The most fundamental point of Greek politics, the one to which Hellas owed both its strength and its weakness, was that its political life was both ostensibly and really the life of independent cities. The *ἄστυ*, which was politically the *πόλις*, was the unit, and the only lasting unit, of Greek political existence. No smaller unit had any value in Hellenic eyes; the villager was regarded as essentially lower than the

citizen, and the worst political disgrace was the breaking up of a city into villages. There was a higher unity, but it was always vague, shadowy, and incapable of any lasting realisation. The common name of Hellenes, their common language, their common religion, their common use of historic shrines and noted oracles, the common concourse of men from all parts of Hellas to the great national games, and, in the later times of Greece, the need for common union against common foes, were all forces tending to unity. But the union thus attained was always weak—a thing of sentiment more than of real potency. The one lasting unit was the *ἄστυ*, where the houses of fellow-citizens clustered round the sacred heights of the Acropolis, and freemen ruled themselves in public *ἐκκλησία*, untrammelled by any power beyond their own. For the purposes of their common religion and common games, an Amphictyonic Council administered a hazy kind of international law; but the coercive jurisdiction that enforced this law was in the hands of the separate city-states. For the purposes of warfare the forces of the various Hellenic states might be united under a single general; but such union was only temporary, and had no higher sanction than the free will of the leaders of the armies thus united, under special circumstances and for a special need. Loyalty, obedience, patriotism, ambition, all had one centre; and that was the *πόλις*, city and state—a state because it was a city, and therefore sundered from all other towns by its inherent rights, just as it was severed from the rest of the land by its walls and, in most cases, by the mountainous ramparts that were the original cause of its independence. So complete was this independence that a Greek citizen visiting

the next town to his own was an alien there, debarred from intermarriage, from acquiring property, and from the remedies of the law, a foreigner among those who spoke his own language and worshipped his own gods. At one time Athens, at another Sparta, at another Thebes, took the lead among the cities of Hellas, and imposed its will, with more or less success, on the weaker city-states; but at no time, till all were involved in one common ruin, was there such a thing as a Hellenic *nation*, united in a common political life.

This being so, the ethical position of a Greek would naturally be essentially civic; the duties that lay outside himself would present themselves as duty to his city and duty to his fellow-citizens. And Grecian ethical thought took no higher standpoint till the rise of the Stoic philosophy, when a new idea was imported into it from without, enlarging, but not destroying, this fundamental idea of man as a citizen. This foreign element in Greek thought is of importance to us, for it was one of the germs from which sprang the idea of the City of God.

In the island of Cyprus Greek colonies—each an independent city-state, as in Hellas—were planted side by side with colonies of Phoenicians who lived under much the same conditions. One of the most ancient of the latter settlements was Kition, a purely Phoenician foundation, whose origin is lost in antiquity; in the tenth chapter of Genesis it appears as “Chittim,” among names (Yawan, Rodanim and Elishah) that mark various branches of the Hellenic race. From this city of Kition came Zeno, commonly called “the Phoenician,” the founder of the Stoic philosophy; from Tyre, Sidon, Askelon, Carthage, Tarsus, and other Phoenician cities came

his chief followers; and the whole character of Greek ethical thought was changed in the hands of Stoicism. "Its essence," says Sir Alexander Grant, "consists in the introduction of the Semitic temperament and a Semitic spirit into Greek philosophy." We may go further, and say that, not only a Semitic, but a distinctively *Phoenician* spirit was introduced; and that this was nowhere more evident than in the Stoic conception of the higher citizenship that belongs to man.

Like the Greek, the Phoenician was generally an inhabitant of an independent city. The rocky gorges of Northern Palestine cut off the settlements of "the Canaanites" from one another; and the civic independence of the race survived their colonisation of the Delta and their return to Southern Palestine to garrison Gath and Gaza and Askelon on the coast-road to Syria. But, unlike the Greek, the Phoenician was essentially a wanderer and, in particular, a sailor. And so, as a trading mariner, he saw many lands and many men, and saw them, not with the half-bewildered wonderment of the Greek traveller, but with a real need of understanding their ways and manners. To such a Greek as Herodotus, foreign life revealed many of its secrets, but yet in such a manner as to force on his attention most of all its essential difference from Greek life; to him non-Hellenes were strange beings, with ways often unseemly and always more or less unlike the ways of his own people. But the Phoenician seaman, a merchant skipper abroad and a merchant prince at home, could not but look on aliens with other eyes. He was cruel to them when they hindered his plans or interfered with the prosperity of his own state; but he was cruel, too, under similar circumstances,

to his own fellow-citizens. And the whole supremacy that he strove to maintain rested, in its last resort, on his understanding of the ways of foreigners and his power of piercing through outlandish fashions to the human nature, common to himself and to them, that underlay these peculiarities. So, by the very nature of the case, the Phœnician was the inventor of the idea of "humanity"; only as an idea, not as a practical fact. It never affected his statecraft, but it passed into his philosophy; and from him, by way of Stoicism, it passed over into the philosophic thought of Greece, in a form determined partly by its origin and partly by the Hellenic environment into which it forced its way.

The most distinctive ethical peculiarity of Stoicism was its attempt to base conduct on general, or rather universal, principles. Its idea was not the perfect Greek, but the perfect *man*. On the one hand, the result was an overbearing individualism—the Stoic "wise man" was self-sufficing, his own master, his own king. But this individualism manifests itself only as against all the lesser forms of dependence; the wise man is above state power, and general convention, and popular opinion. He is so, however, only because he belongs to a higher unity; he is a citizen, but "a citizen of the world." And it is to be noted that this cosmopolitanism of Stoicism went beyond the bounds of the inhabited earth. Wide as was the margin of unknown lands that lay beyond the ken of even the most adventurous Punic trader, the earth itself was not enough for the craving of his spirit for a wider sphere. His wise man was a citizen of the *κόσμος*—of the universe, conceived as an orderly whole; the law of his life was the law of universal nature, and

the city-state that was ruled by that law was nature itself—the one realm of the one God above all gods, whose offspring men were, and who alone, in the last resort, was the actual ruler of the universe. So Stoic thought left man still a citizen, but a citizen of the world; and the Greek conception of the πόλις remained embedded in Greek philosophy, but purified, expanded, and deepened, so as to take in the Fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of men, and the oneness of law and life.

There are not wanting traces of the influence of Stoicism in the philosophic thought of the New Testament. They are strong in St. Paul; and, though not quite so marked in the Epistle to the Hebrews, of which the philosophic motive comes mainly from Plato, yet they are present here too. And one of the elements that go to form our author's conception of "the City of the living God" is this Graeco-Phoenician idea of man as citizen of a city extending as far as Nature itself—a "cosmopolite," a "citizen of the universe."

(2) But to this there was added another thought. The Greek idea of political life, as we have seen, was embodied in many separate city-states, each self-sufficing and independent of all the others; and the expansion of this idea, so as to grow into a citizenship of the universe, was purely, so far as Greece went, a philosophic dream. But another nation of the old world went far towards reducing this philosophical abstraction into practice. Roman political life, like Greek, centred in the thought of a city—the sovereign city of Rome; and yet the Roman grasped the idea of a wider empire than could be imagined by a Greek. It has indeed been said that the empire of Alexander the Great gave

substantial form to the Stoic vision of cosmopolitanism; but the Macedonian, whether he were a true Hellene or not, had enough of the Hellenic spirit to be unable to construct and maintain a widely extended kingdom. So the nations subdued by Alexander were conquered, but never governed, by him; and on his death the various constituent parts of his empire were again separated—they had changed their masters, but had in no way grown into unity. One by one they fell into the power of Rome, the only ancient Aryan nation that was capable of extending its bounds and at the same time maintaining its unity. But this unity was as truly civic in its ideal as the Greek; yet with a great difference. To a modern Englishman, the peculiar pre-eminence of Rome is almost unthinkable. London may be the brain of England, and Paris the heart of France; but neither London nor Paris bears the slightest analogy, in relation to the "provinces" of either country, to what Rome was to the Roman empire. London has been made by England, and Paris is at best the eldest child of France, but the city of Rome was the maker and the mother of the Roman empire. From Rome Romans went out, to conquer, to rule, to teach the conquered nations. In the period of greatest development of Roman power "all roads led to Rome," because they had originally all led from Rome. The empire belonged to the city, not the city to the empire; and the highest honour that could be done to a foreigner was to make him a member of the city as well as a subject of the empire, by creating him a Roman citizen. The supreme power was wielded by many officers, but, in the last resort, its source and lasting depositary was the body of citizens of the sovereign city, within

whose royal walls the general ceased to hold his command, and the highest magistrates laid down the emblems of supreme authority.

But, unlike both Greek and Phœnician, the Roman had grasped, in a practical sense, the idea of universal citizenship. He carried his *civitas* with him when he left Rome; and, wherever he lived in the Roman world, was still a citizen of Rome. And to this he added another wise provision, which did much to lighten the yoke of his conquest, while it enhanced the majesty of the central city itself. The citizens formed no close corporation; by many roads—a slave by the gift of liberty, an ally by kindly and ready help, the citizen of another town by friendly offices—many men, of different birth and degree, found their way within the sacred circle. Henceforth they too belonged to Rome, and their position gave them many privileges and exemptions everywhere, though its full advantages could hardly be enjoyed outside Rome. So Rome was not merely, like Carthage, a dominant city ruling over subject nations; the golden thread of the *civitas* ran through all the world that came under her sway, and every citizen, wherever he might be, was a member of the great brotherhood whose true home and only perfect place of power and privilege was among the temples and markets that adorned the ancient birth-place of the Roman race. Rome ever aimed at what was practically the extension of the city itself, and strove to draw into herself whatever seemed best in the lands she conquered; the very gods of her subject-tribes found a resting-place and obtained divine honours within the walls of Rome¹.

¹ As illustrating this idea of the essentially self-extending character of the Roman *civitas*, Dr. Thomas Hodgkin (author of "Italy and

With this citizenship, too, the writer and the readers of the Epistle to the Hebrews were well acquainted. They had grown up in a world in which it was the dominant idea: some of them may, like St. Paul, have enjoyed the privileges of Roman

her Invaders," &c.) has called my attention to the following lines of Claudian :—

"Haec est in gremium victos quae sola recepit,
Humanumque genus communi numine fixit
Matris, non dominae, ritu, civesque vocavit
Quos domuit, nexuque pio longinqua revinxit.
Huius pacificis debemus moribus omnes
Quod veluti patriis regionibus utitur hospes;
Quod sedem mutare licet; quod cernere Thulen
Lusus et horrendos quondam penetrare recessus;
Quod bibimus passim Rhodanum, potamus Orontem;
Quod cuncti gens una sumus."

In II Cons. Stilichonis, 150-159.

It was not till the "Edict of Caracalla," in the beginning of the third century A.D., that the citizenship was extended to all free inhabitants of the empire, but this was at once the consummation and the destruction of the ancient policy of Rome. On the one hand, it opened more fully the door to the citizenship, that had long been free, theoretically, to all; on the other, it destroyed the civilising, reforming, strengthening power of that citizenship, by taking away all idea of qualification for its enjoyment.

The above lines of Claudian may be freely translated :—

"In Rome, and Rome alone, that care we find
Which conquers, but to cherish, all mankind;
She dares the vanquished slaves her children call
As mother, not as mistress, of them all.
With bonds of loving-kindness, from afar,
She chains the nations to her victor-car.
Beneath the working of her peaceful hand
The stranger finds all coasts his fatherland;
We change our clime at choice, and fearless roam
To where dim Thule parts the northern foam;
The terrors, once far-dreaded, are unfurled
That fill the furthest corners of the world;
Rhône and Orontes sparkle at our call:
One mighty mother's children are we all."

citizenship; all would know what those privileges were. And, what is perhaps more to the point, all must have been familiar with the idea of universal rule and unity that underlay this citizenship in its historic development. The thought of the "City of God" could hardly have been presented to them without bearing with it some idea of the one great world-ruling city that they knew, and the priceless privilege of its citizenship.

(3) With these two ideas there mingled a third, and this third idea is indeed the one that makes itself most immediately evident. The City of God is "the Heavenly Jerusalem." And this name brings us back to the conception of the city, as it existed in the minds of Jews. The author and readers of the Epistle were—the former largely, the latter at least to some extent—familiar with Greek thought. They were also Roman subjects, possibly including some Roman citizens. But, above all, they were Jews; and the purpose of the Epistle makes the recognition of the Judaic element in the conception most important.

The Jews were not, like the Greeks, Romans, and Phoenicians, essentially a city-dwelling and city-loving people. When they begin to rise above the horizon of history, they are pastoral wanderers—like the *Menti-Sati*, or Shepherd-archers of the Egyptian monuments, to whom indeed their physiognomy and habits proclaim them akin. But in all their wanderings, as in that of many nomads, there was a deep-seated longing for rest; and under this longing, as the author of our Epistle is careful to show, there was a Divine purpose. The means by which this purpose was fulfilled are known to all; and the early story of the settlement of the Jews in Palestine

is the tale of their growth into a settled, town-inhabiting nation. It is noteworthy, too, that all their settled life found its centre in a city. This was not, to be sure, like Rome, the cradle of their empire; it was not an independent city-state, like Athens or Thebes or Sparta. The Greek feeling rose out of city-life, and there remained (save, as we have seen, for a theoretical and philosophical idea, due to foreign influence) fixed; the Roman feeling rose out of the life of the city, but spread out so as to embrace a vast empire. But the Jewish feeling of citizenship moved in towards an ideal city, ever growing more and more in importance; and it was essentially due to the thought of this city as pre-eminently "the City of God." Jerusalem was the city of the kings, the resting-place of the Law and the chosen theme of the prophets, the city of the priests; and so it embodied in itself the ideal of the sacred Israel, in its three great aspects of Kingdom, Revelation, and Church.

We know the main facts as to the final settlement of the Ark of God at Jerusalem, after many wanderings with its wandering guardians; but we do not know all the reasons that led to the final selection of the ancient Phoenician (or, to use the name more familiar to the Jews, Canaanite) sacred city, the abode of Melchizedek and his line of priest-kings¹,

¹ It is worth noting that recent researches make it at least probable that the government of individual cities by priest-kings was the primitive system in a very extensive part of Asia. The very ancient and important Turanian cities in Accad and Sumer were so governed; and the case of Melchizedek and his successor Ebed-Tob at Uru-Salem was probably not the only one in Palestine. A similar system seems to have existed in Egypt before the establishment of the empire, and the earliest traditions as to the Greeks and Italians point in the same direction. It has long been recognised that the union of priestly and royal prerogatives was a characteristic of the

as the centre of Jewish power. We might suspect that its situation within the borders of Benjamin led the first Benjamite king to choose it as the seat of his authority, were it not that it was only finally conquered under his Judaic successor. But, whatever was the actual determining cause, the result was that the city of the priest-kings became the city of both king and priest; and thenceforth all Jewish national life, and all Jewish religious aspiration, looked, like Daniel at his prayers, towards Jerusalem. And over and over again, in the history of the people, we see the *unifying* power of the royal and holy city. When all the other tribes departed from the Judaic monarchy, the tenure of Jerusalem kept Benjamin faithful to the house of David. While the schismatic kingdom and Church that misused the sacred name of Israel was established, its shifting religion, from the first, was divided in its allegiance between Bethel and Dan, and its many brief dynasties moved their capital from town to town; but the hearts of even the subjects of that rival kingdom ever turned towards Jerusalem. So the old "foundation of peace" was a real unifying centre for all Israelites. "There is the seat of judgment, even the seat of the house of David." "For my brethren and companions' sakes I will wish thee prosperity; yea, because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek to do thee good." And if we look for the reason of this, we shall find that it depended on three great possessions, which could be shared by no other place.

(a) It was the seat of the only royal race that really claimed, as of right, the loyalty of all true Israelites.

Aryan nations, and it now seems plain that it was just as characteristic of the Turanians also. In conservative China the emperor is still the high-priest of the ancient religion.

So it embodied the whole idea of Israel as *God's Kingdom*, while that race remained in power; and, in the days of national distress, all the hopes of the people centred in the expectation of the restoration of the line of David, reigning at Jerusalem.

(β) It was the resting-place of the Law, where it was enshrined in the Ark of the Covenant, under the outstretched wings of the Cherubim. So it gave a local centre to the idea of Israel in its aspect as *God's Revelation*. Moreover, this aspect was so closely interwoven with the national and religious life of the nation, that where these found their centre there would the hearts, if not the voices, of the prophets surely be.

(γ) But, above all, it held the one Temple, the chosen sanctuary of the God of Israel. Every Jew was religiously bound to visit it frequently; and, though political differences may have kept many away after the great schism, such a separation from "the courts of the Lord" was really excommunication. There only could a priest exercise his office; there only could any sacrifice be offered; there only could the great feasts, that were blended, in a double reference, with the history and the daily life of the nation, be duly observed. Thus it was the only place where Israel lived in its fullness its life as *God's Church*—a divinely appointed organisation for the service of God by divinely appointed means. So that Israel as a Kingdom, a Revelation, and a Church, may be said to have depended on Jerusalem.

At the time when the Epistle to the Hebrews was written, the royal power of Jerusalem and the Ark with its contained Revelation had become memories only; but they were living memories. And the third glory of the Holy City remained. To it still

gathered Jews from all parts of the Dispersion. An attempt had been made to establish a rival temple in Egypt; but it had won no affection or loyalty from Jews. Jerusalem still held the House of God, and, though the end of the city was fast drawing nigh, the priests still ministered at the altar, and the high priest on the Day of Atonement still went in, with the blood of the sacrifice and the burning censer, to the empty Holy of Holies. So the thought of "the City of the Living God" would, for a Jew at that time, still centre in Jerusalem, the city of the Law, the city of the priest, the city of the king.

Thus we see that there were three different trains of thought that would lead the writer to his idea of "the City of the Living God," and that would be roused by that great name in the minds of his readers; but, above all, the thought of all that Jerusalem was and all that it was meant to be.

Let us now see how these ideas are worked out in the conception of the Church as the City of God.

(1) The Graeco-Phoenician, or Stoic, idea supplied two elements, each of them fundamental. In the first place, in its purely Greek aspect, it shows us the "city" as an organised, autonomous state—gives us, in fact, what we mean when we speak of the Church as a "society," and gives us this in its most definite form. Definite organisation, legislative and executive power, all that is involved in discipline and government, would naturally present themselves to those who read of the "City of God," and thought of a Greek city. "But," it may be said, "not the Greek city-states, but the Stoic universal city—the city of the *κοσμοπολίτης*—was the idea in the mind of the writer." True; but it seems hardly necessary to point out that the citizen of Stoicism *was* a citizen,

though a citizen of the universe; and that when the Stoic represented the universe as a city or state, he meant at least what he said. Not dissociation from smaller unities, but association with one mighty unity—not separation from local laws, but submission to universal law—were the marks of the true cosmopolite. And the city of that cosmopolite was not a vague and lawless agglomeration of all places and all men; it was the universe as an organised whole, with one law and one life. The citizen and his city both belong, not to chaos, but to Kosmos; and if Demogorgon sits behind the throne of Zeus, he is a master of more perfect law, and king of a more perfect unity, not a lord of lawlessness and a ruler of chance and un-purpose. So the Stoic thought would open up to the civic unity a universal sphere, and carry on all the perfection and completeness of the Greek political central thought to the cognition of the universe. And in its final form, as taken into Christianity, its message would be one of an absolutely definite, organised, perfect—and yet universal and all-embracing—government of God. Both of these aspects are set forth in the great definition of the Church with which we are dealing. It defines that Church by its *extent*, and includes all spiritual beings, men living and dead, angels, God Himself; but it does so with many marks of their organic unity. Not without reason, the angels are described as a “gathering” (πανάγγυρις); the “first-born” are an “assembly” (ἐκκλησία); and the final members of the great corporation have, every one of them, some mark added to show them as unifying powers, in whom, in some way, all the rest are one. The Judge is “the God of all”; Jesus is “the Mediator of the New Covenant,” uniting God with all, and

all with one another ; and the "blood of sprinkling," though *not* a being or a member of the unity, is named last of all, as the means by which that uniting work is done. So the Stoic thought here is not "You may find a Church of God everywhere," but "The Church of God is everywhere"—a very different thing.

(2) So we reach one element of catholicity—the catholicity of *extent*. But the Church has never been catholic in extent, as an historic fact ; and so far, the Christian ideal is, like the Stoic, a philosophic dream. At this point we may well look at the second great civic ideal—the Roman. Do not forget that the Roman city idea was a living fact, before the eyes of him who wrote and of those who first read the Epistle. Do not forget that what Rome had achieved and was still achieving supplied definite proof as to what the ideal city might do. For Rome, as we have seen, was a city-state, *teres atque rotunda*, complete in herself as any Grecian city ; but, unlike the Grecian city, extension was her very life-blood, and she had found a means of maintaining her completeness and unity, and yet extending herself so as to grasp at all the corners of the world. She was never incomplete, and yet was always growing. And in that we have no unworthy picture of another aspect of the City of God :—complete in her organisation, "catholic" in her unity, even then—a city let down from God out of heaven, with all her walls and gates and perfect in her bounds and measurements, even then ; but a city let down into the midst of a world, to conquer and to gather in and to unify all whom she subdued. The ever-growing Rome—the *civitas* that ever belonged to the imperial city, but was yet one everywhere in the earth—the body of the Quirites, ever welcoming new citizens into their band—all

the law, and the organisation, and the discipline, and the all-embracing oneness, that was Rome's message to and trust for the world, were in a higher sense the message and the trust of the Church. In idea, she was and is the city of the *κοσμοπολίτης*, of which the Stoic taught. In actual fact, she was and is, like Rome, the one imperial city, a thing of hard fact on the earth, with bounds and limits, but with the power within her to grow out into her perfect *extent*, while remaining the same in *content*: at the beginning, as at the end, the perfect City of God. And the Roman city-ideal might well "strengthen the weak hands and confirm the feeble knees" among the children of the Church of God; for Rome had largely done and was still doing with her *civitas* just what it was the work of the Church to do with hers. If the Greek conception is the *ideal* city of men's faith, the Roman is the potent city of living fact—"the City of the *living* God."

(3) So far we have dealt with two analogies that give us the *extent*, in ideal and in fact, of the City of God. But extent is only half of catholicity; or, rather, perhaps, we may say that in the conception of the Church there are two elements that answer to each other as "the Catholic religion" and "the Christian verity" do to each other in the faith. So the Church has both a broad, nay, a universal extent, and a perfect and definite content; and it is plain enough that neither Greek nor Roman thought can give us the *contents* of the Church. For these we must, as our author does in all this Epistle, compare the things of the Gospel with their shadow-forms in the law; for the contents of the new Jerusalem we must, so far as we can gather them from this picture of her as a city at all, examine her shadow in

Jerusalem of old. The analogy cannot be perfect; in one respect, at least, the Church is more like Rome than the old Jerusalem. For Israel was before Jerusalem, and, in a manner, Israel made Jerusalem; but not so here. Rome, as we have seen, was the maker and mother of the Roman empire; and the Church came right out from Christ, the Bride was the Lamb's wife from the beginning—"Jerusalem which is above is the mother of us all."

The distinctive glory of Jerusalem, as we have seen, was that it combined in itself the representation of the three elements that go to make up the idea of the "Israel of God"—the Kingdom, the Church, and the Revelation. These same three elements go to make up the idea of the Church. When deprived of any of them, she leads a maimed existence; and all the worst faults in her history may be traced to the undue exaltation of some one of these three aspects at the expense of the others. And that for a very simple reason. As we have seen, she is the universal city for man; so too, she is the city of the whole man. And, for the sake of the whole man, she is adapted to that strange triplicity, which is probably only an outward expression of the unity of man's nature, but is an outward expression that we cannot get rid of. So, too, she is the Church of the Holy Trinity, and, as such, has a special aspect in relation to each Person of the Godhead. From the Everlasting Father, the Ruler of all things—yea, the Ruler even within the mystic circle of the Godhead—she takes her rank as kingdom, and her power with man as *will*. From the Eternal Word, from all eternity the Priest of God's universe, she takes her place as God's Church, and is the final home of all that we call *emotion* in man. And

the Revealing Spirit makes her His home,—that He may teach men, and satisfy the *intellect* of man, that necessarily longs for wisdom from God. So her contents include, ideally, all power of kingship, all worship, all teaching—righteousness, religion, and wisdom, given by God to man. She has the throne of David ; she has the Ark of God ; she has the Law, written on the fleshen tables of the heart. There is no temple in her—no one place more than another the dwelling-place of God ; for everywhere in her whole extent she is God's temple, where God Himself dwelleth and is worshipped.

I shall examine these separate elements in the content of the Church in their order ; for the present, I desire only to show how God gave three great revelations to men, each centring in the thought of a city. And, in the fullness of time, He drew these together, so that one man, who had the best of reasons for knowing them all, bound them up in one thought—the thought of “the City of the living God.” It is “the city that hath the foundations.” Deep He laid them :—the foundation of self-completeness, in the Hellenic mind ; the foundation of catholicity, in the old Canaanite's dream of cosmopolitan brotherhood ; the foundation of living power and growth, in the might of Rome ; the foundations of righteousness, and truth, and holiness, in the old Jerusalem. There is another city—Babylon the Great :—the Babel built high on light foundations, not in the due proportion of the Jerusalem of God ; the Babel not let down, like this, from heaven to earth, but rising up vainly from earth to heaven ; the Babel of many tongues and many aims and frustrated purposes, that shall and must fall. But this is the City of God.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOLY MOUNTAIN.

“The mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established.”

THE new Sion, the Heavenly Jerusalem, is not only the City, but the Mountain of God. In this it follows closely the analogy of the old Jerusalem, which appears continually in the Old Testament as both mountain and city. For the full force of the former name we must look back a little, and examine the idea that the Jews had in their mind when they spoke of “God’s holy Mountain.”

The Hebrew race, as we have observed in the first chapter, seem to have been a branch of those tribes known to the Egyptians as *Menti-Sati*, “Shepherd-archers.” These people were, at a very early period, inhabitants of the flat country lying between Egypt and Palestine; and their earlier home was probably the valley of the Euphrates, the alluvial plain of Shinar. They were thus emphatically a people of the valleys, and an inland race; and these characteristics separate them very completely from both the Amorite hill-men and the sea-loving Canaanites with whom they came in contact, in later days, in Palestine. But, in spite, or perhaps in consequence, of this origin, they seem at all times of

their history to have been associated in a peculiar manner with mountains. From the first they revered them, with a deep religious awe; and, long before the days of the Captivity, a mountain-top was the special place of sacrifice, and one hill at least was known as "the Mount of the Lord." This is, however, at this particular period, rather the reverence and awe of the lowlander for the mountains that he dreads than any deeper feeling.

The next stage in the thought of the sanctity of the mountains carries us somewhat further in the same direction. During the time of the wanderings in the wilderness and the earlier years of the nation in Palestine, the name of "The Mount of God" was especially appropriated to Mount Sinai, though other hills, such as Ebal and Gerizim, had also a high reputation for sanctity. It is worth noting what this implied. All the tale of Sinai was one of terror. It was the mount that might not be touched—the dwelling-place of the Terror of Darkness, from the midst of whose thunderings came the Voice that spake the Ten Words of the Law. It was the mount at whose feet Israel lay when they sinned their great sin of idolatry, and the plague came from God to avenge His broken covenant. It lay, far beyond their borders, in the wild land where their fathers tempted God and, to their own undoing, saw His works. There was the mountain of God, with its inaccessible crags rising out of the dreadful desert, a thing of awe and terror. They dwelt outside the mountain and feared it.

In the earlier days that followed, the time of battling for possession of the land, the hills are still terrible. They are the home of the Amorites,

the almost gigantic kinsmen of the Libyans who held the hill-country against Phoenicians and Jews alike, and who seem only, at last, to have been half conquered, half incorporated with their conquerors. All round the invading Hebrew army were the hill-fortresses of these "strange children," and of other races, too, of different blood. The mixed blood of the Kenite blacksmiths, and the neighbouring strength of Edom, entrenched themselves alike in rocky mountain-forts; and the name "The Mount of God" belonged as yet to no hill within the chosen land.

But the Jews had a wonderful capacity for adapting themselves to changes of life; and, in due time, as they spread over Palestine, and filled the hill-country as well as the plains, they came to know the mountains better and to love them as friends. They too made their nests in the rocks; and chief among their hill dwelling-places was the Holy City itself, where citadel and Temple stood side by side for worship and defence. And so we find the special name, "the Mountain of God," withdrawn from Sinai and given to Jerusalem. They speak still with awe and reverence, but they speak from within, from the heights of the hills. When they toil in danger below, "I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from whence cometh my help." When they tell of the defence God gives, He is their "rock and fortress"—their mountain castle. And when the prophets speak of the establishment of God's kingdom on earth, they naturally describe it as "The mountain of the Lord's house." It is a bulwark against enemies outside, and a guard of peace within: "They shall not hurt or destroy in all My holy mountain." So, long before the

Epistle to the Hebrews was written, the forefathers of its readers had left the mount of terror, and had come to Sion, Mount and City of God; and by this name of "mountain" they expressed the strength, and power, and visibility, and dignity of the chosen city of their race.

It is noteworthy that our Lord Himself has seized on this same idea, and used it to point a moral—that of the conspicuousness of His Church. "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid." Without dwelling on this image again, He enforces the same lesson in many parables. Through all His lessons as to His Church, one aspect of that Church is prominent. It is the "kingdom of God" or the "kingdom of the heavens." As such, it is described as a great tree, seen and sought by the fowls of the air; as leaven, transmuting by its power the whole mass of meal with which it is mixed; as salt, not merely for one country or a few countries, but for the whole world. The Church of God is, in fact, foreshadowed by the Divine Master as one, as visible, as world-wide, and as so far a centre of authority and power that it can justly be called a kingdom.

Now we must not forget that both our Lord and the Apostolic writers spoke as Jews to Jews; and therefore that, in using language familiar to Jews, they did so with the history of the words they used behind them. So, in speaking of the Church Christ left on the earth as a mountain, as the mount of God, as a city on a hill, they did so with full knowledge of what was intended by the older religious guides of Israel when they used the same phrases. We have seen that "God's holy mountain" or "The mountain of the Lord's house" was, in

the mouths of the prophets, the natural figure of Jerusalem as the centre of the Jewish kingdom, exalted as the centre of a world-wide power; and we can hardly fail to see in the use of the same name for the Church of God the transfer of the same ideas to her. She is a kingdom, visible and supreme, organised and united. For all these characteristics of the Church there is separate evidence, but they are conveniently summed up in her description as the mount of God.

So she is one; the unity of the Body is as certain as the unity of the Spirit. She is visible;—in all their dealings with the Christian Church, the Apostolic writers address, not a mysterious body, whose members are known to God alone, but a great organisation, embodied in definite societies in different places. She is organised;—with rules and customs, with a judicial authority among her members, with a recognised gradation of ranks in her hierarchy. She is, in fact, a kingdom, with authority and an executive, and armed with powers of reward and censure for the enforcement of that authority.

There are three great questions that are thus presented to us. The first is that of the *visibility* of the Church. In what does this visibility consist? The second is that of her *unity*. In what sense is she one? And the third is that most immediately suggested by her description as a kingdom—her organised authority. How far does this reach? And how is it to be enforced? And what is the relation between the authority of the Church of God and that of the kingdoms of the world?

(1) The doctrine of the visibility of the Church hardly admits of a doubt. The theory of an "In-

visible Church," a unity known to God alone, is of late origin, and only too evidently originated from the desire to reconcile two irreconcilable things—the New Testament testimony to ecclesiastical unity, and the modern development of a divided Christendom. Most evidently, there is no outward and visible unity under which all the warring sects of Christendom can be comprehended; and nothing remains but the doctrine of an *invisible* unity, in which are included "all who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity." This society has no common belief, no common authority, no common worship. It is not a kingdom, or a Church, or a revelation, in any sense in which its nature is really made clearer by applying any of these names to it. It has no outward method of entrance into its fold, and no outward means of marking the continued union among its members. Now how far does such a unity meet the New Testament definitions of the Church?

Take, first of all, the name that is generally used for the Church—"Ecclesia." This was not a new word in New Testament times. It was the recognised name for the public and lawful assembly of the citizens of a Greek city for legislative purposes. And this is used in the New Testament as a name for the "congregation" of the children of Israel in the wilderness, and, many times over, for the great society of Christians. If this society is an unknown body, invisible, incapable of being assembled, "Ecclesia" is surely a most inappropriate name. It was surely not to such an invisible union that our Lord ordered certain complaints to be made; it was not such an invisible unity that was "gathered together" at Jerusalem, and

that issued a decree in full form at the first great synod; it was not an invisible company, but a known organisation, that Saul of Tarsus first persecuted, and then joined; it was not such a shadowy unity, but a visible society, in which God set Apostles, prophets, and teachers, or that Timothy was bidden to care for. So far at least as these passages go, the Church of God is spoken of as a visible society.

Again, it is not a society of holy persons, known as such to God, but of members in outward union, good and bad, sincere and insincere. It is "a net cast into the sea," that "gathers of every kind," a kingdom with faithful and unfaithful servants, a field sown with wheat and tares. The Church, or kingdom of God, in our Lord's parables, is certainly not an inward unity of those who are sincere servants of God. Nor can we trace such an idea in the Epistles. The Church at Corinth, or in Galatia, or in Laodicea, was certainly not invisible and perfect, but a visible community, with a fair proportion of members who were decidedly imperfect and unsatisfactory.

Under the next idea, that of *unity*, we will consider the organisation of the Church; it may, however, here be noted that all the evidence for the existence of the Church as an organised unity is also proof of its visibility.

Now so plain is the proof that our Lord spoke of a "kingdom of heaven" and the Apostles of a Church, conceived as visible and as containing both good and bad members, that there is only one way, save frank recognition of the Church as a visible body, of escaping the force of the definition thus involved. It is this. The word "Church," we are

told, is used in the New Testament in two entirely different senses. First, it is used for the outward organisations of Christians in various places, and, in a secondary sense, for these organisations as constituting a sort of great society. Secondly, it is used for the great invisible unity of Christians, known to God alone. When we read of bad members of the Church, when we find words that obviously imply visibility, the word is used in the former sense. When, on the other hand, strong words are used of the nearness of the Church to God, of its members as members of Christ, of the Church as redeemed by Christ's blood, the reference is to the invisible body. Now we may pass by the fact that (as in St. Matt. xviii. 17) some of the strongest words as to the Church must relate to a visible body; we may even forbear to dwell on the strangely *ex post facto* character of the whole argument. But we cannot avoid asking a few questions as to this ingenious theory. Does the New Testament itself, in any passage, mark and define this difference? Does it anywhere contrast these two different ideas, explaining wherein the invisible Church differs from the visible? Does it, as a natural accompaniment to the words that imply visibility in the one case, use any that suggest invisibility in the other? And, above all, by what means are we to distinguish the sense in which this ambiguous word "Church" is used in any passage, save by the relation it bears to doctrines that are themselves founded on the distinction? If the Apostolic writers meant two different things, why did they speak of them by the same name? And, in conclusion, why did they use for this invisible body a name that means, and can only mean, a visible gathering—why did they call what cannot possibly

be assembled an "assembly"? The source of the distinction is far too obvious. It is an attempt to read from without a new meaning into certain passages of Scripture, because they cannot otherwise be tortured into agreement with ecclesiastical systems that have either been developed out of theory or formed as a result of departure from Apostolic practice.

I shall therefore, through the rest of this discussion, always deal with New Testament words as to the Church, or the kingdom of God or of heaven, as relating to a visible society or societies.

(2) But which is this Church—a society, or societies; one, or many?

The names under which the Church is spoken of in our text certainly suggest her unity. "Sion, Mount and City of God," is one mountain and one city; and, as we saw in the first chapter, all the three ideas that combine to form the conception of "the City of God" directly suggest unity. And this view finds support from many other passages. "There is one body, and one Spirit." The Church is "the Bride, the Lamb's wife." Christ is the Head, not of many societies, but of "the Church." It would, however, be tedious to set down all such passages; we will sum them up in this proposition:—

(a) The Church is spoken of continually in terms that imply her unity.

But, it is said, we read not only of the Church, but of Churches; and the Church in each place is spoken of in such a manner as to imply that it is a unit. This is quite true; but it is also true that this is never done in such a way as to imply that there was no higher unity to which the individual "Churches" were subject. The ministers of different

Churches were ordained by the same Apostolic hands (Acts xiv. 23); the decree of the Synod of Jerusalem was sent to Churches outside the city; St. Paul pressed his authority over many local assemblies of Christians (1 Cor. vii. 17; xvi. 1; 2 Cor. xi. 28, &c.). As we shall see presently, moreover, there was a strong bond of outward unity running through all these separate, or quasi-separate, societies; so strong that their separation is a point of far less moment than the "one body, one Lord, one faith, one baptism," in which they are united. So that we may state this as the second proposition relating to the unity of the Church :—

(β) The Christian societies in different places are spoken of as "Churches," but never so as to imply their independence of the greater unity, "the Church."

But we may go much further. Whenever "Churches" are spoken of in the plural, the reference is to societies in different places. There is no trace of such a thing as the existence of different Christian societies in the same place. Soon after Apostolic times, it is true, there is something that might be mistaken for such a separation; for there seems now to be evidence leading us at least to suspect the existence, for a time, of a Jewish and a Gentile Christian community at Rome, each with a separate bishop. But, even if this be the case (and it is certainly not fully proved), such an arrangement would bear no resemblance to the existence of separate bodies of Christians in modern days. It could only be described as an arrangement for convenience, by which two communities of Christians, differing from one another in various social customs, were organised side by side, with separate officers,

under the shadow of the same Church. If it were anything more than this, it could only be called a very early infraction—and a short-lived one—of Apostolic rule.

For there can hardly be any doubt that the existence of separate Christian communities in the same place is not in accordance with Apostolic principles. The crucial case is that of the Church in Corinth. Here there were "divisions," we are told. "One saith, I am of Paul; another, I am of Apollos; another, I am of Christ. Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? Is Christ divided?" St. Paul, at any rate, unreservedly condemned the divisions in the Church at Corinth.

Now these divisions were either of two things—"schools of thought," composed of earnest partisans of individual leaders, within one Church, or actual sects, beginning to be formed in that Church. If they were the latter, St. Paul very obviously condemns the formation of sects. If they were not, he condemns the spirit that leads to the formation of sects, and therefore, *a fortiori*, the formation of sects itself. For, I suppose, it can hardly be maintained that St. Paul would speak of mere partisanship as dividing the body of Christ, and destroying the temple of God, when it had not led to outward separation, but would not include in this condemnation the far greater division caused by allowing this partisanship to have its natural result. Those who defend sectarianism by denying the analogy between the divisions of the Corinthian Church and that of modern Christendom forget two important points. First, the Corinthian divisions, on their own showing, were far less deep and serious than ours. Secondly, our divisions have resulted from the very

spirit that manifested itself at Corinth ; there it was in bud, here it is in full fruit. So that we may add a third point as to the unity of the Church:—

(γ) The introduction of “divisions” in the Church is emphatically condemned in the New Testament.

But we can carry the principle of unity much further. The outward unity of the Church depended on its common possession of certain things. It had a common discipline. In New Testament days, this organisation centred in the Apostles, who had divinely given authority to teach, to organise, and to govern. The new converts admitted into her borders entered into “the doctrine and fellowship of the Apostles.” From the Apostolic College at Jerusalem the missionaries went forth to their work, and to that Apostolic College (Acts xv.) they referred doubtful questions. And, in every place, the Church in some way traced itself to the mission of the sacred Twelve, or to that special call, given to St. Paul, and recognised by the Apostles, which was an extension, but not a rival, of the Apostolate. Nor did the connexion of the Churches with the Apostles cease there. They are officials, not in Churches only, but in “the Church,” and St. Paul presses his Apostolic authority as a ground of obedience to him, and a reason for the exercise of authority on his part, in Churches long organised and established. So that we may state another mark of the unity of the New Testament Church.

(δ) The branches of the Church in various places found unity in a common Apostolic authority.

Again, the Apostles did not leave the unity to depend on their lives. Through the whole New Testament, we have a series of evidences that they

gave to the Church an organisation that was a means of continuing this unity. They "ordained elders;" they sent others, like Timothy and Titus, not only to rule, but to ordain. And the ministry thus given is regarded as the gift of God to the Church. "God hath set some in the Church; first, Apostles; secondly, prophets; thirdly, teachers." In my book, "The Christian Ministry in the New Testament," I have examined the evidences on this point, with the object of showing that the ministry thus given consisted of three orders, and no more; here it is enough to point out that the New Testament Church possessed an organised ministry, tracing itself to the Apostles, that there is no sign of any other Ministry, and that the Church of later days always claimed this just succession of an Apostolic ministry among its possessions. Thus we see that—

(e) The Church in Apostolic days found unity in a ministry traceable to the Apostles, and handed on this ministry as a means of maintaining this unity.

I might dwell on other forms in which this unity was expressed—the one faith, once for all delivered to the saints; the free intercommunion between members of different local Churches; the unity of law, that made the "customs" of the Church a sufficient objection to local innovations. But I prefer to pass on to a more marked bond of oneness. In all parts of the Church, there was one great sacrament of admission to Christian fellowship, the baptism ordered by our Lord Himself; and there was one great sacrament of Christian unity. "Since there is one loaf, we who are many are one body, so far as we are partakers of the one loaf." So we find that there was another bond of union:—

(§) The Christian Church was united by the two great sacraments—Baptism, administered to all as the only way to membership, and Holy Communion, by which that membership was proved and maintained.

But all these points of union are weak, compared with the fundamental one, from which sprang all the rest. The unity of the Church is continually traced to the most certain of all reasons—the Oneness of the Father, the Oneness of Christ, the Oneness of the Spirit, the Oneness of God in His full being. On this our Lord Himself based His prayer for her unity: "That they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me, and I in Thee, that the world may believe that Thou hast sent Me." In rebuking the divisions at Corinth, St. Paul finds his two strongest arguments in the indivisibility of Christ, and the fact that the Church was the temple of the One God. "If any man destroy the temple of God, him will God destroy;" and the context makes it quite plain that this "destruction of the temple" was the division of the Church. "There is one body, and one Spirit;" and the Church, in relation to Christ, is "His body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all." Again, in the great hymn of unity (Eph. iv), the oneness of the body is traced to a direct connexion with the Oneness of the "God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all;" and the unity of the ministry, in its various grades, is drawn out from this unity as a consequence. Nor is St. Paul alone in this method of argument. St. John describes the Church as the Bride of Christ, the wife of the Lamb. St. Peter tells the Jews of the Dispersion to whom he wrote that they had refound their lost unity in Christ. "Unto whom

coming, a living stone . . . ye also, as living stones, are built up, a spiritual house, a holy priesthood. . . . Ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession . . . which in time past were no people, but now are the people of God." They had thus recovered the lost privileges of the one chosen nation, and had attained to its ideal as "a nation," by union with Christ; they were "a spiritual house"—in other words, a temple—built up on Christ and with one another; one nation, one house, one temple of God. That this thought was not a mere passing illustration, but was fundamental in the Apostolic conception of the Church, is evident from its appearance in four different New Testament writers. The "living stone" of St. Peter, on which "living stones" are built up, gives us the same thought as St. Paul's words, "built upon the foundation of the Apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner-stone." To the same root-thought we may trace St. John's descriptions of the "foundations" of the new Jerusalem, and the description given by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews of "the city that hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." And this city is "Sion, Mount and City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem"—it is, in fact, the Church of God. So we may set down, as our last proposition as to the unity of the Church—

(η) The Church is one, because she is one with the Father, one with the Son, and one with the Spirit; and one too, as Father, Son, and Spirit are one in the unity of God.

We have seen that these descriptions and characteristics cannot apply to an invisible Church, without outward form. It seems hardly necessary

to add that they cannot apply to a congeries of sects, bound together only by the Christian name. Such a congeries is not an "Ecclesia," for it is incapable of organised assembly; it owes no allegiance to any outward united Church; it introduces, wherever it prevails, that "division of Christ" and "destruction of the temple of God" that St. Paul condemns; it has no common Apostolic organisation, no common life, no common ministry, no common sacraments; it has no common marks of outward unity with Christ. Such an assemblage of sects cannot, then, be the "one body," the one Bride, the one Church of God.

It is, however, one thing to point out that the divisions of Christendom are wrong and "schismatic," and quite another to condemn as schismatics all who find themselves outside the organisation of the Church. Again, it is one thing to condemn schism in general terms, and quite another to suggest means for avoiding and diminishing it. We shall probably be better able to avoid both the uncharitableness of unjustly condemning all outside the Church as schismatics, and the ineffectualness of a condemnation that suggests no remedy, by considering certain other points connected with the unity of the Church.

First of all, the unity of the Church, so long as it stops short of the realisation of its full ideal of Catholic extent, is of course imperfect. But, on the other hand, it is the imperfect expression of a unity that does not cease to exist merely because it is not realised. For Christ took on Him the nature of every man, and, in a very true sense, all mankind are His body. And God is the Father of all. And the Holy Spirit works with all. Virtue and holiness,

outside the unity of the Church, are yet due to the grace of God, the power of Christ, the energy of the Spirit. So that God has not altogether cut off even that life which is the distinctive life of the Church from all who have cut themselves off from her. Again, not only is it true that there is a membership of Christ in man even before baptism, but it is also true that baptism admits, not to this or that sect, but to the Church of God; and, though the baptized person may be taken straight away from the font into the midst of schism, it is doubtful whether he can forfeit his membership of the Church, save by deliberate and open-eyed rejection of his rights. So that we cannot say, nor do we wish to say, that the many members of organisations outside the Church who have been born in, or bred in, or blundered into, a system of division that they found ready-made, are schismatics, cut off from the unity of the Church. The sin of schism implies at least knowledge; and though where there is schism there must needs have been sin, we cannot always lay the sin at the door of those who are now in the schism. The sect is schismatic and separate from the one Church; its members may or may not be so, according to circumstances.

Moreover, the continuance of schism at the present day is often due to a misunderstanding as to the nature of the oneness of the Church. I venture, with some hesitation, to lay down three great principles as to Church unity, the neglect or ignorance of which seem to me to be the main cause of the more innocent schism—and I trust that most of the schismatic spirit is of this kind, and not that of Diotrephes, who loved to have the pre-eminence.

First, Church unity rests on things, not on opinions

about things. We may, and do, within the Church, differ largely in our views as to the precise nature of the ministry, or of the sacraments; we may, and do, vary in our interpretation of Scripture and of the creeds. But we keep the things themselves; our opinions about them are a secondary consideration. There have probably been whole generations in the Church of England during which the doctrine of Apostolic succession was almost forgotten, and the view taken of the sacraments was altogether unworthy. But there never was a generation, or a year, or a day, during which the Church had not the Apostolic ministry, or in which her fold was entered save by baptism, or her worship shorn of the one divinely appointed service, the Eucharist. Opinions on these points may be of importance, among other reasons because they may affect the maintenance of the actual things; but, from the strength of the outward organisation of the Church, the things themselves are likely to remain, even when current opinions undervalue them. Now this is generally forgotten in the making of schisms. They result, as a rule, from the rise of some new opinion, or from revolt against some opinion; the opinion is often fleeting, the revolt is often very soon forgotten. But the schism, unfortunately, has passed out of the region of opinions into that of things, and it survives its own fundamental theories. It has acquired a body, and with it a bodily life. If men would remember that things last while opinions alter, they would be, on the one hand, less ready to leave the old things for new opinions, and, on the other, less ready to embody what may be only a passing theory in the lasting life of a new sect. To put the matter in a homely fashion: a priest can preach doctrine

derogatory to the Church or to the Eucharist, but he cannot rob me of the Eucharist or the Church itself. If I am wise, I will remain in the Church, and receive the Eucharist; his time will come to an end, but they will remain, and, meanwhile, I may retain my own opinion and need not believe his.

Secondly, the unity of the Church is consistent with very great intellectual differences. It was so in Apostolic days. St. Paul and St. Peter differed at least once, and differed very decidedly, but they worked together still in the same Church. It is hardly possible to doubt that St. Paul and St. James looked at Christianity from very different points of view, and it is quite possible that, though both showed the truth of Christ in various aspects, they might have each been unable to see the full truth that embraced the doctrine of the other; but they did not found separate Churches on that account. The division between the followers of St. Paul and of Apollos at Corinth may have rested on some intellectual differences in their teaching; nevertheless St. Paul condemns the division utterly. So we may fearlessly admit that there are, within the Church, very strong differences on many points. God has not made us all alike, and, so long as men are imperfect, a man's fallibility is likely to cause him to err on some points, and his limited mental view is likely both to exclude some truth from his vision and to keep him from reaching the higher verities in which much that he accepts and much that he condemns find their unity. We may even admit, without hurting our position, that some of our members differ more from one another than each does from certain Dissenters. It may be so; but this does not affect our condemnation of the schis-

matic position of the latter. Schism is not difference of opinion, which we often cannot help, but separation on account of that difference, which we can generally avoid. So the second common cause of schism is the exaggeration of the importance of intellectual differences. When these do not amount to heresy—that is to say, when they do not deny those fundamental verities of Christianity without which it ceases to be Christian—when they allow us to join in the creeds of the Church, and to unite for Christian work, there is no earthly reason—save the selfish one of desiring more space for the airing of our own intellectual peculiarities—why we should leave what is more important than our opinions, and more lasting, namely, the one kingdom, Church, army, family, that God put us in for the defence of right against the evil in the world.

Thirdly, the unity of the Church has always been largely due to her grasp of *history*. She is one now, because she is one with the ages that are past, and this is possible to her because the main lines of her faith are laid in history. Now schism, on the one hand, generally breaks deliberately with the past; and, on the other, undervalues historical, and over-values metaphysical, doctrine. The continuous unity of the Church depends on her continuous organisation, and the undervaluing of this organisation, when carried into effect, leads to sectarian schism. Again, the great symbols of the Church dwell very little on metaphysical doctrine, with one great exception. The Athanasian Creed is metaphysical, but not so metaphysical as it seems. It is, in reality, a very careful statement of the relation between the doctrine of the unity of God ("the Catholic religion") and that series of historical facts which form "the

Christian verity." But the other two creeds are almost wholly historical; and this sense of a common historical basis beginning in the fact of the Incarnation, and continued in the visible unity of the Church, has a wonderful uniting power. If we examine the origins of sectarianism, I think we shall generally find them twofold. On the one hand, there is a carelessness as to the maintenance of historic unity; on the other, the attaching of an undue importance to such metaphysical doctrines as the nature of justification or the doctrines of freewill and election. So that the third common cause of schism is departure from the historical element in Christianity—a departure that can hardly be justified in view of the fact that Christianity claims to be essentially an historical system.

For these and other reasons, schism keeps the Church from fulfilling her ideal of unity; but she is intended to be one, and is one in her perpetual ideal—one society, not many; the city on the mount, visible and one.

(3) Closely bound up with her visibility and unity is another question, that of her authority. This is involved in her name of kingdom; for there can be no kingdom where there is no rule. It is involved in the description of her as a "city"—as we have seen, the autonomous Greek city was one of the elements that went to the shaping of the "City of God." It is not only involved, but directly expressed, in many other ways—in our Lord's command to refer to her judgment certain points connected with our social life, in St. Paul's plain reference to each local Church as a court for determining matters between the members, in the same Apostle's fearless assertion of his own authority in matters of morals

at Corinth, and in his many references to the exercise of discipline as a part of the work of the Christian Church. So far, these passages all refer to her internal government; but there is another sense in which authority may be and has been claimed for her. As this latter is, at the present day, the more important question, and as, for reasons to be presently stated, it cannot possibly be separated absolutely from her internal discipline, we shall pay special attention to the more general aspect of the question, and ask, "What authority ought the Church to possess in the world?"

Of course she has the authority involved in internal discipline. She has a hierarchy of various grades, and this includes a duty of obedience from the lower to the higher officers. The authority required for enforcing this obedience is always admitted, in theory, as belonging to her; but there are certain practical difficulties in the way of carrying it out. It is hardly possible to apply any form of spiritual censure or punishment to any man, whether priest or layman, without involving in some way his "civil rights"—his character, his comfort, or his livelihood. And the care for these rights belongs to the State; so that even the internal discipline of the Church perpetually cuts across the lines of civil jurisdiction. The priest cut off from the exercise of his profession and the layman repelled from the altar suffer, both in reputation, and the former probably also in pocket; and it is impossible to avoid resort, on the part of either, to a civil court for a remedy against what involves civil injury.

This is an essential element in the case, in no way depending on the accident of "establishment," but resulting from the fact that the Church does not

and cannot possess coercive jurisdiction. She is not "of the world," and so cannot use the civil sword of physical compulsion. But she is in the world, and so, even in her internal jurisdiction, has to deal with those who have many interests in the world; so that she cannot possibly avoid some sort of contact with her members' "civil rights." Thus the question of her internal discipline becomes part of a larger question, her relation as a whole to civil power—the position of the "kingdom of God" in relation to the "kingdoms of this world."

In New Testament days this relation was simple enough. The Church was persecuted and proscribed by the civil power, so that there was perpetual war between her authority and that of the State. Under these circumstances, her policy was also simple. Her members obeyed the civil ruler, except in those cases in which it was plainly their duty as Christians to disobey—in all cases, that is to say, where the commands of those rulers were contrary to God's law of religion or of morals. But, in so doing, she by no means admitted that the State was supreme in all moral or social matters, or that she had no mission to direct the conscience of the State. She refused to accept religion from the State; she refused to accept the State's standard of morality. She had her own rules of marriage, of divorce, of unity among her members. The ruler was "the minister of God"—except in the not infrequent cases in which he became the enemy of God. And when we analyse this position of the early Church we can hardly fail to see that it resolved itself into the following proposition:—The Apostolic Church recognised civil authority whenever it was consistent with the principles on which her own authority

rested—that is, with the law of God in religion and in morals.

Now some part of the State law was from this point of view wholly good, and this she unhesitatingly obeyed. If a Christian were punished by a heathen magistrate for theft, or murder, or riot, her judgment was all in favour of the heathen and against the Christian; the ruler bore God's sword, and she thanked God that he did not bear it in vain. But other parts of this law were bad, in different degrees. Some were so bad that they could not be obeyed without sin; and then the early Christian disobeyed and took the consequences. Some were bad, in that they rested on principles that could not stand in the light of Christianity—such as the permission of slavery—and then the Church tolerated these results of imperfect knowledge for a time, and meanwhile aimed at taking them away by helping men to better knowledge. So we see that the early Church was able to bear with an imperfect condition of morality in certain respects for a time, but only because she waited and worked to destroy by her own influence the ignorance on which this imperfect morality rested. She treated the whole relation between herself and a heathen dominant State as transient, by the very necessity of the case.

So she aimed at changing that relation, and she did change it. For this very plain reason, it is quite impossible to argue with any definiteness from the relations between the Church and an ancient heathen state to those between the same Church and a really Christian Government. Such arguments form the common clap-trap of a certain school of ecclesiastical reformers, and are the usual topics of political dissent. The answer to them all is easy. The relations

between Church and State have altered, because the Church and State themselves have altered. The Church has changed in her circumstances; she is no longer the exponent of a religion opposed to that of the State. The State has changed more thoroughly; there is a great difference between a heathen emperor and a Christian sovereign. An illustrious English prelate was once asked by a lady who held the current Dissenting ideas on this point: "What would the Apostles, who lived in persecution and died as martyrs, say if they saw their successors living in comfort and sitting in Parliament among peers?" "Say! my dear madam," was the answer; "they would say, 'What a blessed change!'" The story is old enough; I tell it again only to point out its true force. The relations between the early Church and the State were quite unlike that between the same Church and the modern State; and they ought to be unlike. For the old relations were abnormal: God certainly did not intend the State to be heathen and persecuting. And it was only because the State was heathen and persecuting that these old relations were as they were. We may put it another way. We cannot restore Apostolic relations between Church and State, for in truth there were no such relations—the Apostles never had an opportunity of indicating the right relation between the Christian Church and a Christian State.

On the other hand, the nearest *scriptural* analogy to the present position of the Church towards the State is to be found in Judaism; and this bore a very close resemblance to what we call Establishment. The Jewish king had authority that was often closely involved in ecclesiastical matters; a wicked priest was amenable to his jurisdiction no

less than a wicked layman. But, on the other hand, the Jewish Church had a very powerful position in reference to the State: if the king, in matters of rule, governed the priest and prophet, the priest and prophet, in matters of religion, ruled even the king. In Zechariah's vision of the perfectly restored Jewish kingdom, this took shape in the restoration of the Son of David reigning as king, with the priest enthroned beside him, and the prophet guiding the counsels of both by the word of the Lord.

And this was practically the position taken by the early Catholic Church, so soon as the adoption of Christianity by the State made it possible. The jurisdiction of the emperor over priest as well as layman was unquestioned; but neither the emperor nor any of his counsellors was permitted to usurp either the teaching, or the priestly or the disciplinary powers, of the Church. If the emperor could punish a bishop for crime, the bishop could use discipline with the emperor for sin. And, speaking generally, we may say that the maxim of the Church remained the same as under the heathen empire. She recognised civil authority whenever it was consistent with the principles on which her own authority rested—that is, with the law of God in faith and morals. Only, from the change in the State, this recognition became vastly more possible; for the State, too, had learned to take God's law as the basis of its own government. From the common recognition of the same Divine law—from the Christianising of the State—came a very close relation between the two authorities. But the Church always retained, and often acted on, her right to oppose the State itself, whenever the State acted against the law of God; nor did she stultify herself

and reduce this right to a nonentity by admitting the decision of the State as to what was the Divine law to bind her.

The maintenance of this relation was comparatively easy, so long as an undivided Church existed in an undivided empire. But with the separation of the Eastern and Western Churches, and the later break-up of the Roman empire, new difficulties arose. There are certain broad principles of statecraft and civil justice, for which the whole world is indebted to imperial Rome; and, after the break-up of the empire, these still lived on in the states that formed themselves out of her fragments. But there are many other points in the details of government, which were certain to take different shapes in different nations. So long as the Church possessed a similar adaptability, all was well. But, unfortunately, the dissolution of the imperial power of Rome was the signal for increased centralisation in the Christian Church; and the result was that an attempt was continually being made to adapt the ways and usages of many different countries to the Italian customs that had come to prevail in the Church. From this came the Reformation. As regards its effect on the relations between Church and State, we may define the Reformation as an attempt to adapt the Church in different countries to the needs and the habits of these countries, while retaining all its essential points. But, wherever the Reformation was accepted, the fundamental relation between Church and State remained unchanged; the civil ruler still retained power over both ecclesiastics and laymen, and the Church still retained all her powers in Divine things. There was no real separation of the two elements involved in this,

for the State, no less than the Church, was still held to be bound by Christian law. In relation to various questions—marriage, divorce, &c.—conflicts of jurisdiction sometimes arose between the two authorities; but these questions were distinctly secondary, seeing that both authorities ostensibly based their decisions on the same law. It made little matter whether the bishop's or the king's court heard a divorce case, when both bishop and king held that the supreme authority as to divorce was the Divine law, as held by the Church of God.

I have dwelt on this point for a special reason, omitting many details in the development of the relations between Church and State. Thus I have not thought it necessary to dwell on the oscillations by which the chief power was now on one side, now on the other; on the unsuccessful attempt to introduce a unity, in imitation of that of the Church, among European nations, through the "Holy Roman Empire;" on the struggles between king and Pope as to jurisdiction over clerics, and institution of prelates, and many questions of ecclesiastical rights and revenue. Right through all these, there was a well-recognised agreement of Church and State as to the purpose of their power and the basis on which it rested; and some sort of *modus vivendi* was always possible while the State, as well as the Church, recognised Christian law as supreme, and resorted to the Church for the final interpretation of that law.

But fresh difficulties arose, and the relations of the Church with the State to-day are terribly complicated by them. In the first place, one result of the Reformation (though a result not intended, in England at any rate) was the weakening of the old

idea of Church unity. In England, by God's mercy, we were able to retain all the marks of continuity and unity; but it was not so everywhere. And the rise of new religious organisations abroad, that had separated themselves from the historical continuity of the Church, led to the formation of similar organisations in England. Thus, gradually, we came to our present state, in which in one realm there are at least a hundred different sects. Secondly, the State itself gradually ceased to be absolutely Christian. I have nothing to say to the causes of this, or to criticism as to the exact amount of wrong involved in it; I desire only to point out the results. They are unfortunately only too plain.

(1) The religious judgment of the Church is no longer supported by the whole conscience of the nation; and no means has been found, or is likely to be found, of putting any other religious judgment in its place.

(2) The judgment of the State is no longer regarded as ultimately resting on a religious sanction—it is gradually coming to be considered, more and more every day, as having to do only with secular motives.

(3) As a result, a way has been opened for sharp conflict between Church and State on many points; and, in several respects, the conflict has already begun.

(4) Since there are, as we have seen, many questions on which Church and State both have a right to speak, and since, under the present *régime*, it is quite possible for them to speak in contradiction of each other, we seem only too likely to be thrown into a hopeless dualism as to authority, especially in moral questions,

(5) This dualism is at present avoided by a system of compromises ; but these compromises already show signs of breaking down.

Let us make the precise effect of these changes plain.

(1) The judgment, on moral questions, of an undivided Church, or of a Church strong enough to enforce her opinions, is expressed in the form of theological law. There is, of course, some element of moral belief common to all, or almost all, of the religious organisations at present in England ; but this can only be expressed in the very unstable form of moral sentiment, and can only take definite shape through the action of that authority in which alone all warring sects can find a common voice—the civil power, the State. Thus we are presented with a curious spectacle. There are many questions in which the dearest interests of religion are involved, but these can only be decided by some civil authority. A school board determines whether the children under its charge shall or shall not have religious education ; if it decides in favour of such a religious education, it has to determine on the precise nature of the instruction that shall be given. To this end, it must take either of two courses. It may give permission and facilities to certain religious bodies, in order to their instructing the children in religious matters. It may, instead, fix on a certain standard of religious instruction, to be given by its own officers. In the former case, it “establishes” every religious body to which it extends permission to teach. In the latter, it establishes itself as a religious teaching body, and its standard of instruction is, for better or worse, a creed. Thus we see that the division of organised

religion throws the decision of absolutely religious questions into the hands of a purely civil authority.

(2) This authority, again, is in its own nature not religious. Day by day, the feeling is growing that civil government must be colourless as to religion. In the discussion of moral questions, such as that of the prohibited degrees for marriage or the lawful grounds of divorce, it is scarcely possible to obtain any recognition of transcendental religious law. Speaking broadly, the one acknowledged ground of civil legislation in moral matters is secular prosperity, tempered somewhat by considerations based on the relative strength of different forms of religious sentiment. Thus we have a power that tends to become less religious every day, and that almost prides itself on its freedom from any religious bonds, armed by circumstances with a deciding authority in religious questions. And this increase of the religious authority of the State is the result, strange to say, not of the strengthening of the union between Church and State, but of its loosening.

(3) Meanwhile, it is important to remember that the position of the Church in moral questions has not changed. What she was when she found herself face to face with a heathen State, what she was when she claimed and had the spiritual allegiance of every man in the country, that she is still. By her very nature, she cannot accept moral judgments from the State, when they differ from those she has learned from her Lord and His Apostles. If civil authority choose to treat affinity as no bar to marriage, she cannot break up the whole religious basis of marriage by admitting the claim. If the State choose to legalise divorce for any ground save one, she cannot prove false to her own history and

doctrine by meekly accepting the decision. If the State choose, through the mouth of a school board, to order her children to learn Socinian doctrine, she cannot give up the charge of their souls into the hands of this non-religious power that legislates in matters of religion. The State rests its decisions on passing moods of opinion; the Church, on an everlasting revelation. The State is concerned only with what is expedient for this life; the Church, with what is right and true and good for ever. There must be conflict; it cannot, under the circumstances, be avoided. There is war over education, war over divorce, war over the question of affinity. In two of these battles the question is already practical. In the third, it may become practical any day.

(4) How is this to end? As things are, we cannot avoid duality of authority. The State must have a right, if it educate children at all, to determine whether the education given shall or shall not include religion; and, with the best of intentions, it cannot avoid to some extent determining the details of that religion. The State must have a right, since marriage is in part a civil contract, to make some regulations as to the conditions of marriage. And the right of the Church is at least as evident. There *must*, then, be a dualism; if we can see the real reason of this dualism, we may be able to see also in what direction a remedy for it can be found.

(5) At present, we try to find a refuge from this dualism in compromise; but this system is foredoomed to failure, and is already breaking up. The failure of compromise in the education question is only too evident. An absolutely irreligious education

offends the conscience of the Church, and of most Nonconformists; an education resting on the common belief of all sects has already proved itself practically Socinian, and therefore really enforced instruction in the principles of one sect; any attempt at enlarging the principles of this religious standard created by a civil power must end in dissatisfaction to many and the hurting of many consciences. The best compromise, "a strong conscience-clause," is also the most illogical compromise; for it involves the contradiction of the very principle on which the whole system rests, in compelling a certain number of parents to pay, directly or indirectly, for religious teaching from which they feel that they must withdraw their children. At present, the whole education compromise is both illogical and tyrannical. It is illogical, because it is an attempt at a *via media* that does not exist, between principles that are contradictory. It is tyrannical, because it is determined and enforced only by the arbitrary will of chance majorities.

Take, again, the compromise on the divorce question. By the ancient and undoubted law of the Church, the re-marriage of at least the guilty party in a divorce for adultery is not allowed. Our Lord's words ring clear enough; He permits the divorce of an adulterous wife, but declares that "whosoever marieth her that is put away committeth adultery." But the English civil law, having divorced itself from the law of the Church, permits this re-marriage. An attempt has been made here, also, towards a compromise. No priest is compelled to solemnise such a marriage. But he must allow the use of his church for its solemnisation; he must recognise it as a marriage; he dare not, save at his peril, use

our Lord's own word¹ to describe it; if he should repel the persons whom he refused to marry from Holy Communion, he would render himself liable to a civil action and to punishment. Nor does the matter end here. In other countries—in most of the United States, in many of our own colonies—divorces are allowed for other causes; and a priest in those countries has exactly the same problem to determine, with greater difficulties. Establishment has nothing to say to the question; the difficulties, the obligations, the penalties, exist as strongly in the case of Dissenting ministers, and would exist as strongly if the Church were disestablished to-morrow.

Lastly, take the case of the "prohibited degrees." Here, as yet, there is no practical difficulty. The State at present accepts the Church's table of these degrees. But a strong effort is being made to alter this table. Now mark the results if this attempt should succeed. In the first place, the present difficulties as to the marriage of divorced persons will be repeated. The State cannot, without being false to herself, allow persons who have availed themselves of permission given by her to marry to be treated as criminals by the Church. The Church cannot, without being false to all her trusts, allow her ruling in a question that concerns religion and morals to be overborne by a purely secular decision—above all, when this is avowedly based on purely secular grounds. Secondly, a greater mischief, likely to

¹ By a recent Act of Parliament, any imputation on a woman's chastity is slander or libel without proof of special damage. This is, of course, right; but it is plain that it renders the statement that a given re-marriage of a woman divorced for adultery is itself adulterous, actionable and punishable,

produce a grave conflict, will be done. For the Church's table rests on a principle; and no other principle has ever been even suggested. The destruction of this principle in one class of cases leaves nothing behind but caprice; and the retention of *any* prohibition on the ground of affinity will be, like the other *modi vivendi* we have been considering, an illogical, baseless, and unstable compromise.

In all these questions, compromise means relief from present difficulties; but the relief has no rational basis, and only means worse conflict by-and-by, ending in hopeless dualism.

How then are we to find relief? I can only indicate the lines on which any permanent concord between Church and State can be found. Their attainment at present is not practical; but they are logical, and they will at least show the direction in which we must strengthen our defences.

First of all, let us remember that the Church is a kingdom, and, as such, must have a power of discipline to enforce, in some way, her decrees in religion and morals. Secondly, it is, as we have seen, impossible so to fence off this discipline as to keep it separate from the civil life of those to whom it is applied. Thirdly, this is no new experience of the Church. When she had to deal with a heathen civil authority, she had to face the same problem in a worse form. Fourthly, she had a definite policy then; and under it she refused to obey the unchristian rules of a heathen State.

If, then, a State has in any respect ceased to be Christian, by making laws at variance with fundamental Christian ethics or inimical to the religion of Christ, must not the Church, unless she is to cease

to be a kingdom, treat these unchristian rulings of a partly Christian State exactly as she treated the unchristian rulings of a heathen State? I confess that I can see no alternative. To-day, as of old, the Church owes obedience to all law that is not contrary to God's law; to-day, as of old, she is bound to obey God rather than men. And to-day, as of old, she must have the power of deciding for herself what is God's law. It is absurd to hold that, by learning Christianity from the Church, and thereby winning accord between them, the State acquired a right she certainly had not before, of forcing the Church to accept her voice as equivalent to the voice of God, especially when she disclaims a religious basis for her opinion.

But we must remember that all disagreement between the Church and the State, whether the State be Rome eighteen centuries ago or England or America to-day, is anomalous; and that the Church cannot placidly accept this disagreement as a part of her lasting lot. The ideal expressed in establishment is the true one, that of the ultimate oneness of Church and State. These two differ in function, but they should not differ in their ends. And if there is only one thing that causes them to differ, that one thing must certainly be wrong. Now the cause, and the only cause, of this difficulty between Church and State is the division within the sphere of religion itself. As we have seen, this divides the religious conscience of the nation. The secularisation of the State is a necessary consequence of this division; and conflict between civil and religious authority is the necessary consequence of the secularisation of the State. There are, then, two great ends to be aimed at in our ecclesiastico-political

work. One is the reattainment of religious unity—a unity quite compatible with freedom of intellectual life and difference of opinion on many points, but not compatible with the division of religious authority. The other is the making of religious “Establishment” into a reality. For to that it must come, perhaps through many wars and troubles for the Church no less than the State. To that it must come, for the Church has a message to the State no less than to the individual, and she is a kingdom no less than a revelation; and a kingdom of God with united power and free scope for her influence or authority is, in the highest sense, an Established Church.

CHAPTER III.

THE LIVING GOD.

"For the life was manifested."

THERE is one fundamental problem as to the relation of God to His works, that lies at the bottom of all the greatest differences that exist among Theists. And this problem is theoretically insoluble, though, for practical purposes, its very recognition enriches and enlarges our conception of God. It may be stated thus. Is God a Being quite separate from His works, transcending all finite existence, all human thought—a Maker, Shaper, Guide, of life and movements outside Himself? Or is He a Being who lives in His works, immanent in all His creation—a Life, Soul, Will, by whose presence a dead world is quickened into life?

The former of these views is called the doctrine of the "transcendence" of God, the latter the doctrine of His "immanence." The former finds its strongest and sharpest expression in such teaching as the exclusive Monotheism of Mohammed; the latter shades off, through many forms of Polytheism, into the Pantheism or quasi-Pantheism of philosophic Brahmanism, of some forms of Buddhism, and of Taoism. Christianity adopts neither

view as exclusive; to its representation of God both conceptions of the Deity bring elements, and the result is a doctrine that combines the strongest points of both transcendence and immanence.

But it is a remarkable fact that almost all the *distinctive* ideas of Christianity rest far more on the immanence than on the transcendence of God: "In Him we live and move and are;" and He is not only "above all," but "through all and in all." The mystery of the Trinity expresses both of these often seemingly opposed aspects; but the distinctively Christian part of this doctrine is that which teaches the Godhead of the Son and of the Spirit, and both of these truths give us an idea of God as immanent rather than as transcendent. We are in Christ and Christ in us—our Lord is essentially "God in man." The Holy Spirit is God in His works—not only the Life-giver, but the very Life. And Christian morality differs from all other moral teaching in adding to its doctrine of the law of God the revelation of the indwelling life of God.

Now this aspect of God as present in His works—as not only the Giver of life but the Life Himself—is expressed most definitely in that which is one of God's most recognised titles—"the living God." This of course implies His personality; there is no definition of Him as personal in the Bible, but there is no trace of any thought of Him as anything but personal. But His "life" implies something more than His personality. It is His life as manifested in Christ, and the life of Christ in us necessarily carries with it the thought of the life of God in us, or else we divide Christ. It is His life as manifested in the Holy Spirit, and the "energy" of that Spirit, who is "the gift of God," implies most definitely the thought of the

presence, wherever that Holy Spirit is, of the very life of God. So that when we read of the Church as "the City of the *living* God," we are most plainly meant to realise that God lives in His Church—that she is not a mere society sent forth into the world to work with a life of her own, but an organisation in which the quickening life is God's own life. She is the body, and Christ the soul; she is the Church in which the Holy Spirit abides; she is the Temple of the living God. And so through all her movement there is an "Eternal, not herself, that makes for righteousness" and for every other good thing that she brings to man; and this indwelling life of God makes her not only the kingdom, but a revelation, of God. She comes to us holding the Scriptures, and thus bearing a revelation; but, over and above this, she is herself a revelation. She cannot add to or take away from the revelation given once for all in her Master, the "faith once for all delivered to the saints;" but yet that revelation has been unfolded, and that faith has grown, in her hands, and her own nature and constitution have themselves entered into this revelation and made its unfolding possible. She cannot set up her own authority as a second Scripture; but yet that authority has its own special work in the revealing of God. Scripture proves, but the Church of God teaches¹; Scripture's is the lasting record, but hers is the living voice. We need not argue the question as to whether Scripture without the Church, or the Church without Scripture, could teach us all we need to know of God and His plans; it is enough to point out that, as an historical fact, the world was never offered either the Church without the Bible or the

¹ "The Church to teach, the Bible to prove."—Mr. Gore.

Bible without the Church, and that their respective shares in the revelation of God differ in *function*, so that each implies the other.

Now this revelation in the Church has a wider range than that of earth; to "the principalities and powers in heavenly places" there is made known "by the Church the manifold wisdom of God." But at present we have to do only with the fact that the Church is a revelation of God on earth, because she has the life of God in her. How and for what purpose does she reveal God? How is this life manifested in her life on earth?

It seems to me that there are at least three different directions in which we may seek for the marks of this Divine life. First of all, in the marvellous vitality and adaptability of the Church herself; secondly, in the revelation of God involved in her teaching; and thirdly, in the revelation she brings of force—of not only the wisdom, but the power of God.

(1) It seems hardly possible for any thoughtful student of history to avoid noticing the marvellous vitality of God's Church. She began her work under the most difficult and unpromising conditions; and it would be a hundred-times-told tale to recount the "foolishness" encompassed with which her "preaching" went out into the civilised world. If we look on Christianity as a mere outgrowth of Judaism, the problem of its spread in the world becomes insoluble. The most conspicuous fact about Judaism at all periods was its absolute unfitness to become a universal religion, and nothing was more characteristic of the Jews than their lack of anything like missionary enterprise. They "compassed sea and land to make one proselyte;" but only among those who were

already in their midst; and they had no sort of desire to enlarge their borders by bringing other nations into their Church. When Christianity arose, they were less likely than ever before to enter on missionary work; they were conquered and despised, the *vitality* had left their religion, and it had become little more than a stereotyped creed with a stereotyped ritual. And from the midst of this environment sprang the Church of God, full of fresh life, stretching out her arms to embrace the world, seeking to win, not her own countrymen, but mankind, to follow and worship One who had been rejected by the rejected of the world. And the Church succeeded; she won the greatest intellects to Him whom Israel refused to hear, and drew the arms of Rome to serve One who had lived among the bondsmen of Rome and died by the death of shame that Rome appointed only for felons and slaves. The Church of God rises on the world already full of life.

And her whole history tells the same tale of unaccountable vitality. We often are apt to think that she is subject, in our day, to special dangers; but her constant fate has ever been to stand in the midst of danger, to suffer, and yet to live—

“Oft doomed to death, yet fated not to die.”

And these perils have never been the same, from one generation to another. She has met all forms of unbelief, and each in its turn has perished, but she lives on. She has been attacked in turn by rival systems, from the philosophy of Gnostics and Neo-Platonics, through the successive scepticisms of Deists, up to the protean forms of scientific Agnosticism. Each of these advances, trampling on the dead bodies of its predecessors; and from none of them does the

Church escape untouched, but the wound is never unto death. She has borne persecution, indifference, mockery; she has suffered from the enmity and from the patronage of the world; she has borne all kinds of evil within her own borders; and yet her life has ever blossomed out in fresh forms and with new force. She has known what it was to harbour heresy, till it was almost as hard to find a Catholic untainted with Arianism as a subject of Ahab who had not bowed the knee to Baal; yet Arianism perished, and the Church lived on. She has been torn asunder by schisms and beset with rival sects; but they too perish and she remains. She has felt the hand of death-in-life upon her, but God has sent renewal of life to her; she has been at times so filled with corruption that men in sport declared her continued existence her greatest miracle and the surest proof of her Divine origin. And Boccaccio's jest had truth in it: the power by which the Church has survived the dangers of tribulation and prosperity alike, the perils of being persecuted and the perils of being let alone, is the very life of God.

Inseparably connected with her vitality is her adaptability; it does not *explain* her vitality, seeing that it is itself as wonderful and inexplicable, but it is a part of the same characteristic supernatural life that belongs to her. She has a fixed organisation, but it is fixed by the character of man, not of men of this or that age or nation. The environment she came from was purely Semitic, and yet her greatest triumphs have been among Aryans. If we seek an origin in time for her, she belongs to the first century; yet she still teaches, and still reaches out beyond, the nineteenth. In her, as in her Lord, there is neither Greek nor Barbarian, male nor female,

bond nor free; for her life touches and transmutes all nations, finds the common humanity of man and woman and yet takes count of the special needs of each, and lives on untouched by the systems and separations among men that belong to the varying forms of social life. And, wherever she goes, she finds a form suited to the needs of those among whom she walks, and yet retains her own characteristic shape and life. The Churches of the East and the West differ largely in detail, the differences depending on national and social differences of character: and yet they find that the same Scriptures, creeds, orders, sacraments, prove their power on Eastern and Western alike. The Church of England took shape in an absolute monarchy, but she is as capable of living beside the constitutional government of to-day, and even in Republican America she grows and prospers. All that is fundamental in her is seized by men of all ages and all climes—each learns to say of her, "This is mine," and none can ever say of her or any part of her message, "This belongs to another age or another nation—it is theirs, not mine." The Jews, said a great French divine, are the shortest proof of the truth of Scripture; we may add that the Church of God, in her continued life in all ages and many nations, is the shortest proof of something greater than even the Bible—the manifestation among men of the very life of the living God.

(2) If we wish to appreciate the full force of the Church as a Divine revelation of *teaching*, we must remember some facts, that ought to be but are not elementary, as to God's manner of teaching the world. First of all, God has always taught more by the living voice than by records—the latter have the highest evidential value, but the former has always been God's

chief didactic agent. Secondly, progressiveness and development are essential to all teaching; they are strongly present in both the Old and the New Testaments, and it is scarcely to be supposed that the last-written words of the New Testament froze up the living waters, and fossilised the life of the all-teaching Spirit. Thirdly, the whole history of the Church is opposed to the idea of her being only the bearer of a dead record: dogmatically, she has ever advanced in her knowledge of God's truth; and, practically, her vitality and progress demand as a condition a continually fresh power of applying the truths proved from the record to the ever-shifting lives of men.

(a) God has always taught more by the living voice than by records; inspired teaching can always be traced to inspired men. In the recognition of this truth, Christianity stands out in sharp contrast with such systems as Mohammedanism. Mohammed was the bearer of the Koran—the bringer of a written message from God. The Law of Moses, on the other hand, contains indeed what we may call a core of fixed record; but this is given with a full commentary and with provisions that adapt, explain, and amplify it to the needs of those to whom it was first given. And we find that, in referring to the Law, our Lord is fond of giving it its full personal force, by referring to it under the name of its “mediator,” Moses. “Holy men of old spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;” the Spirit moved *them*, and their words and works come to us with the warrant of *their* inspiration. So, too, in later days, the teaching of God comes through the prophets; and their distinctive work was done with the living voice. And, when we come to the

crowning point of the whole system of teaching, the one perfect Revelation came, not in a book, but in the Person of the one perfect Man and perfect Teacher, the Incarnate Lord. "God, who in many fragments and many ways spake in times past to the Fathers *in the prophets*, at the end of these days spake to us *in a Son*"—the roll of inspired men finds its final perfection in the Man in whom dwelt and spake the Eternal God. And our Lord carried on the same system. He gave to the world, for the spreading of His teaching, not a record, but men and a gift in men—the inspired Apostles, with the gift, poured out on men, of the Spirit that should lead them into all truth. So the teaching of God, as given to the world, was always living, fresh, growing; there was certainly no period before the close of the New Testament canon (if we may except the time of degraded Judaism just before our Lord came to earth) when the teaching force in the world was a record and no more. The Law was enshrined in the Temple, but the voices of the prophets ever made themselves heard; they taught, and by the Law they proved their teaching; and we see that this plan was continued in the Christian revelation.

Now this bears a strong analogy to the teaching power of the Church. She has unfolded God's lesson given once for all in Christ, ever dealing with it as only a living voice can deal. We shall see the full meaning of this presently; for the present it is enough to point out that the "faith once for all delivered to the saints" was given to them to unfold, not to keep locked up; and that the Church of God has never treated the Bible as a record that for ever ended the very system under which it was built up.

"And who art thou, blind unconverted Jew,
That with thy idol-volume's covers two
Buildest a jail to coop the living God?"

She has expounded the Bible's brief hints, and combined its scattered truths, and read the whole in the light of her own history; and the result is that teaching which rests indeed on the Bible, but is given by the Church of God.

(β) But not only is it true that God's teaching has always been given through men and by the living voice; it is also a characteristic of it to be essentially *progressive*. From this point of view, we look upon Israel of old as being in a manner herself the revelation of God. The tribes that met from year to year in the Holy City had, in a special sense, God with them; and His life and His wisdom unfolded themselves to them and to the world, in the living history of their race. Modern Biblical criticism may tend perhaps to dwell too exclusively on this aspect of the revelation in Israel as a development; but it will have done its work well if it fixes in men's minds the essentially living and progressive character of that revelation—if it enables us to realise that there never was a period when the Bibliolater's Bible reigned, in the Bibliolater's acceptance of it, among the Jews, till it became, in the period immediately before our Lord's advent, a dead record, mainly because Israel itself was a dead nation. I need hardly dwell on this aspect of the Old Testament, which is by this time familiar to all. The records of the prophets are the records of men whose inspired teaching threw ever more and more light on the ways of God and the destiny of man; and the sad sarcasm of our Lord's words, "It is not meet that a prophet should perish out of Jerusalem,"

shows how, as must happen, they brought each his fresh truth at the risk of life itself. And, to him who realises this aspect of revelation, the Old Testament displays itself as the unfolding of ever-growing knowledge of God, of an ever more and more purified ideal of national life, of an ever-widening ideal of religion as the relation of God not only to Israel but to man. Then the sleep of death fell on it, till it woke once more to its new and risen life in Christ and the still growing revelation of God in Christ.

It is not, perhaps, quite as evident, and yet it is quite as true, that the New Testament also is progressive. Naturally, its progress is of a different kind. It never transcends the revelation involved in the coming of Christ; but it seems to me impossible to dispute the statement that its conception of that revelation is progressive. The nature of the New Testament makes this progress less plain than in the Old Testament. The time covered by the New Testament is shorter; its writers are continuous, and continuous within the limits of a lifetime. But the progress may be traced, for all that; and even the extravagances of dead-and-gone German New Testament criticism have done good work in helping us to appreciate this fact. I may take three conspicuous cases to illustrate this truth, that the New Testament is itself a progressive revelation.

First, the Gospels are progressive. Christian theologians do not admit, and have no right to admit, any contrariety between the Synoptic records and the Fourth Gospel. The essential teaching of St. John is to be found in the earlier records. Nevertheless, it is not to be found in the same

way. In the Synoptists the doctrine is in germ, in St. John in full blossom. The *λογια* of their Lord in the former *imply* His Godhead; His discourses in the latter definitely *declare* it. The doctrine of His pre-existence is necessary to explain the Synoptists; it is taught with no uncertain voice by St. John. The records of the former do not necessarily involve the writers' full understanding of the deep truths that underlie those records; St. John understands, comments, and debates. Here there is a distinct progress; and if it be true that the exaggeration of this progress into innovation in doctrine shows complete misunderstanding of the nature of the Christian revelation, it is also true that the ignoring of it shows a want of appreciation of what revelation has always been and is always bound to be.

Secondly, the Pauline element in the New Testament is distinctly progressive. It is of course true that the calling of the Gentiles was implicitly contained in the Gospel from the first, and was foreshadowed in more than one event in our Lord's life. It was suggested in the Song of Simeon, and found an early, though shadowy, fulfilment in the visit of the Magi. But no word of our Lord's till after His Resurrection (and then only in one brief sentence) laid on His Church the duty of going out into the world outside Israel with the message of a universal Church bearing a universal Gospel. It is true, too, that not to St. Paul but to St. Peter came the first call to preach to Gentiles. But there not only is, but was felt to be, a great difference between this special call and the admission, now so familiar to us all through St. Paul's writings, of the absolutely equal terms on which Jews and

Gentiles meet in the Church of God. That admission involved a great deal. It necessarily implied the abrogation of the Mosaic Law as an essential of Church-membership; and, on this account, it necessitated the calling of the first synod of which we have any record. It practically required the Jew, in his membership of the Church, to divest himself of his old pride of being one of the nation in whom alone God dwelt, and of his new pride of being one of the nation from whom sprang the Christ, and to go out into the world on equal terms with those who, before their call to Christianity, had been mere heathens and unbelievers. And this was distinctly felt in the early Church. The departure of St. Mark, the quarrel between St. Barnabas and St. Paul, the dispute between St. Paul and St. Peter, the need of a synod to determine the question, the fact that the difficulty was not at once laid to rest even by the decision of this synod—all these facts show very clearly that Pauline theology was widely felt to be a new departure in Christianity. And so it was—not an innovation, but a distinct development. We can see now that it was foreshadowed in the prophets and necessarily implied in the Incarnation; but the first perception of this fact was new when it came, and constituted a distinct *progress*.

But the third case of progress is even more striking, and bears more directly on the claim of the Church to speak with a living voice in matters of doctrine. We are often told that the New Testament contains no Christian priesthood, but only the doctrine of the priesthood of Christ; it is not so often pointed out (though it is perfectly true) that the greater part of the New Testament

contains no mention of our Lord's own priesthood. I do not now design to discuss the question of Christian priesthood in general, for which I may refer my readers to my "Christian Ministry in the New Testament;" but it is only fair to point out one important respect in which the development of Christian sacerdotalism follows New Testament lines. In one book only, and that a very late one—one of the latest in the whole Testament—do we find our Lord called a priest. When we come to examine the circumstances, we can see a good reason why the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews should have been the first to apply this title to our Lord. It was manifestly connected with the change in the position of Judaism as a religion. The doctrine of our Lord's priesthood remained in abeyance so long as God left the Jewish priesthood in possession of their Temple and their prerogatives; so soon, however, as the Temple had fallen or was tottering to its fall, the Church, through the mouth of the sacred writer, made her claim to the priesthood of Christ. It would not be difficult to show that there are other doctrines that are also first clearly enunciated in this Epistle; I have noticed that of our Lord's priesthood as the plainest in its evidence and the most important of them all. And it is worth observing the manner in which this new development of Christianity was introduced. It is not stated as a bald fact, or supported by the *ipse dixit* of the author. It is reasoned out, supported by argument, proved from Scripture. But no one would pretend that the earlier scriptural evidences of the doctrine would themselves have suggested it; and the very process by which these evidences were marshalled, drawn out, and sup-

ported by reason, is itself progress and development.

Thus we see that the New Testament, like the Old (though under different circumstances and within narrower limits of time), is itself a progressive revelation—the continuous teaching of the living God.

Now our claim on behalf of the Church is this. She has always been “the Mountain and City of the living God.” She was in Apostolic days, and has never since ceased to be, “the body of Christ”—the body of which Christ is the soul. The Holy Spirit still dwelt in her, after all the Apostles were dead. For “the gifts of God are without repentance”—they are unrecalled, and eternal like their Giver; and so He has given an everlasting Church for the continuous teaching of mankind. It is not her province to demand novel beliefs from man; the Incarnation is the one perfect revelation of God to her and to the world. But the Incarnation is more than a truth—it is a mine of truth; and the New Testament itself shows us how the Church went deeper and deeper into that mine in search of the precious things of God. So we can say, in one sense, of every historical development of Christian doctrine, that it had always been believed, but not that it had been consciously believed. The accurate dogmas of the Nicaeo-Constantinopolitan Creed—the conciliar decrees as to the Holy Spirit—the doctrine of Christian priesthood—the definition of the Trinity—were all, at the time of their formularisation, new formulae, nor did they all meet with immediate or universal acceptance. But they were “contained in Scripture and could be proved thereby;” the denial of them meant, whether the facts were or were not

manifest to those who denied them, the destruction of what had always been explicitly held in the Church. So the Church taught, and proved from the Bible, what perhaps no one would have found in the Bible save for her teaching. The difference, as we have seen, is one of function ; and God has given, besides the Bible, a living voice in His Church.

Here, too, we suffer from division ; and the world loses much teaching because the Church is divided. We refuse to accept the later dogmatism of Rome, not because we will not hear the Church, but because we cannot admit that Rome, by herself, *is* the Church. We cannot think that she, to the exclusion of the East and of England and of Scandinavia, where Apostolic branches of the Church still flourish and teach, can claim this living voice as her own. And we are the less likely to admit this claim on her behalf, when we see her readiness to go beyond the lawful power of the Church—to incorporate elements derived from passing modes of philosophic or devotional thought with ancient doctrine, and form from this strange blend new articles of belief ; to practically treat, not only the doctrines entrusted to the Church, but the Church herself, as a source of new truth ; and to lose all power of new living truth by isolating her dogmatic system from God's other ways of manifesting Himself among men. And so we war, not with Rome, but with her exclusive pretensions ; for herself, as for ourselves and our own Church, our prayer is that God may restore the living voice by giving us back our unity, that we all may be one, and the world may believe that God sent Christ, and Christ sent us, with the word of the everlasting gospel and the voice of the living God.

But the Church is the revelation of God in

another, perhaps even more striking, way. It is not her province to bring out new scientific truth or historic criticism; she is manifestly quite unfitted for this work, and here she must only take and use what God teaches in other ways. But it is her province to live among men, to apply God's teaching to their needs, and, above all, to bring the truths involved in the doctrine of the Incarnation to bear upon them. And, in this work, she has never been simply the bearer of a dead message from Scripture. She has drawn out from the Incarnation many lessons that were, of course, always present in it, but were unfolded by her. Here, too, we have a crucial case—that of slavery. It is not going too far to say that neither the Old nor the New Testament has a single word condemnatory of slavery; but the New Testament has the fact of the Incarnation, which condemns slavery far more than any words could do. And so it came to pass that the development of Christianity dealt with the slave question, and dealt with it without the help of proof-texts or catenae of scriptural passages. Christianity made the slave a brother—a member of Christ, God's child, a fellow-citizen and fellow-heir with his master. And all this, because of the Incarnation. In the might of the Incarnation Christianity has destroyed slavery in Christian nations, and in this has been a revelation of God. Nor has this been her only social work. Not by piling up texts of Scripture and dealing with them as if they stood alone—not by asking what of our modern civilisation is peculiar to Christianity now, and what can be shared by unbelievers—but by seeing what Christian nations are, looking back to what they were when Christ found them, and looking out beyond to what the best of

non-Christian nations are now—we can judge of the vast store of new truth as to the aims and destiny of man that the Christian Church has unfolded, as she went into the world bringing her message of God made Man, teaching what it meant, and so revealing God.

(3) But though Christianity is a new revelation of teaching, it is still more a revelation of vital force; the wisdom of God in Christ finds its necessary complement in Christ as the power of God. This, of course, is what is forgotten when men attempt to estimate the real meaning of Christianity by comparison of its moral and spiritual teachings with those of other religions or philosophies, not remembering that Christianity claims to possess not only the power of showing what is good, but the power of helping men to do that good—not only a closer view of God, but the means of bringing men nearer to God. And if this be true of the effect of the Christian religion on the individual, it is almost more conspicuously true of its effect on the world. The history of Christendom is the history, not only of the growth of new truths, but of a power that enables those truths to pass into fact; so that the Church is a revelation of the living God, not only as the Teacher, but as the Life-giver. It is not an easy thing to estimate the force that is thus used by the Church in the world, when we look only at our own day, and at events that happen around us. As we have already seen in reference to teaching, so too with living power; the divisions of the Christian Church weaken its force, and the divorce of Christianity from the unity of the Church often reduces that force to the smallest proportions. Division is nowhere so bad in its effects as when

applied to actual work; quarrelling sects may happen to agree in a great deal of doctrine, but they cannot pull together in practice. Unconnected bands of soldiers may unite for a battle now and then, against a conspicuously strong enemy, but the results of their victory are apt to be lost when they begin (as sects always do, sooner or later) to fire into one another. And the world is little likely to be stirred into action for God by the efforts of bodies of Christians, who cannot use their own Christianity as a step towards realising among themselves that unity which they desire among mankind, or learn that obedience in the Church must be a condition precedent to obedience of the world to God. Moreover, it is never easy for men to estimate the effect of a given force in their own times. They stand on the shore for a few moments, watching a sea that ebbs and flows indeed, but in waves that themselves wax and wane; and it is often hard, in the flux and reflux of the waters, to tell whether the tide as a whole is rising or falling.

But if we look at the whole history of Christianity we can see the work of the living God in His Church. It is one thing to teach, and another to bring that teaching to effect. But all the ideals that the Church has taught have had actual life in them. She not only preached the doctrine of liberty to the captive, but set him free. She not only gave the world an idea of a better State than the world had seen before, but did a great deal towards making such nations as accepted her rule into such States. The charities and works of mercy of Christendom show her strength; the shaping of human conscience by the conscience of God's Church is a part of her life. And it often happens that this part of her life is

even more apparent than the more intellectual side of her teaching; while men wrangle over the faith, the Church believes, works, and succeeds in her work. In the Franco-German War, a "Christian Brother" was carrying a smallpox-stricken patient in his arms across the hospital tent. "Brother," said a wounded soldier lying near, "I would not do that for an hour for a thousand francs." "Nor I for ten thousand," was the answer, "but for the love of God I would do it all day long." And this man was one of hundreds, who did the same work for the same motives. The power that led them to do so was *not*, whatever men may say, merely a selfish desire to save their own souls; if a man desires only that, he knows that he can do it at less price. It was just what the Brother called it—the love of God; the answer of the human heart to God's goodness, passing into life and becoming life itself in man. And the work done by these Brothers was only one small part of the work that the Church of God has, by the power that she reveals, as a *life* shaping itself ever to present needs, brought into the world. It is often unseen, but, wherever there is pain or sorrow or sin, there that life sends men to forget self and relieve it. And it may be seen in other and more conspicuous forms. All that conception of charity, and help to the weak, and relief to suffering, that is (whether State-recognised or not) an essential part of the conscience of every Christian nation, is a part of the living revelation in history of the life of God as power.

So that the Church of God is a revelation of the life of God—in her own vitality, in her progressive teaching, in the force that has turned her teaching into living fact. Divided as she is, and embarrassed

by the divorce thus brought about between her authority and that of the State, she is yet, wherever she is, a force to be reckoned with, a life that can be brought, and is brought, to bear on each new need and each new difficulty, in fresh forms under each fresh condition. She is not an image, but a living being—the Bride of her Master, one with Him, with His life in her, as He lives on still in the history of the world. If she is this when divided, what would be—what *shall* be, for it must come—the work of her united strength?

“Thou movest a King everlasting;
Thou abidest with man to the end;
Thou art with him to comfort him, casting
Thine arms close about, to befriend.

Thou changest from glory to glory,
Thou growest for man as he grows—
As, peak after peak, high and hoary,
Palm-plumed, clad with vine and with rose,
As bay after bay that with thunder
Of breaker on cliff and on sand,
Running inward afar, rolling under
Great capes of a bountiful land,
Bursts full on the voyager sailing
By coasts of a tropical clime,
In sunlight, in moonlight, unveiling,
Receding—so thou in our time,
In the days God hath made for our moulding,
As we fleet on our way, evermore
Enlargest, upheavest, unfolding
Thy beauty, thy light, and thy power;
And, as ever we speed to the ending,
As earth rolleth on to her goal,
Thou wilt lend us thy strength, ever blending
Thy light with the light of the soul;
Till to naught hath our labour diminished,
Till the deeds have been done God hath willed,
Till the work God hath set man hath finished,
The purpose of ages fulfilled;

Till the stars from their cycles are shaken,
The sun from his fervour hath waned;
And life in our hands we have taken,
The realms of our longing attained."

G. F. SAVAGE-ARMSTRONG.

That is how the Church is a revelation, because
she brings to a living world with living needs the
life of a living God

CHAPTER IV.

THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM.

"Jerusalem which is above is free."

THE next words in the description of the "City of the living God" are thoroughly familiar to us. Popular hymnology has accustomed us to sing of "the Heavenly Jerusalem," and the sweetest strains of many old and many new singers tell of the wonders of that city of all cities, eternal in the heavens.

But it may be doubted how far this is an advantage. Without in any way detracting from the beauty of the hymns in which we sing of the "city God hath made" and "Jerusalem the golden," as a figure of the life to come, we may modestly point out that the "new Jerusalem" of the New Testament is, not a city to come, but a city that is now with us; and that her title of "heavenly" does not in the least imply that she is not now on earth. What it does mean is another question; but we have the consenting witness of three different New Testament writers to the use of this, or a similar, title for the Church of God on earth.

For it must be plain to any careful reader that the "Jerusalem which is above" of St. Paul, the "heavenly city, new Jerusalem" of the Divine, and

the "Heavenly Jerusalem" of the Epistle to the Hebrews, must all be traced to the same source; and it seems most likely that this source was a current idea in early Christianity. And the parallelism between these different writers can be traced further; the close analogy between the phrase "the city that hath the foundations" (in which we ought to notice the presence of the articles) and the careful description of the foundations of the heavenly city in the Apocalypse can hardly be the result of mere accident. It has been suggested that the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews had read, and was directly alluding to, the Apocalypse. If so, we should trace the words on which we are now commenting to the same source. It seems, however, more probable that the idea underlying both descriptions was already current in the Christian Church. If so, the common contents of both pictures would certainly be drawn from the same source, and we have a right to use these common contents in determining what the underlying idea of the word "heavenly" really was.

Now it seems plain to me that this title of "heavenly" does not send us away from earth to the Heaven of God in search of the holy city. St. John's "new Jerusalem" is *of* heaven, but "coming down from God out of heaven." True, it is only at the end of the Apocalypse that she is so revealed; but this does not necessarily demand our acceptance of her as now separated from earth. She comes down to fill the place that had been occupied by her great rival, the mystic Babylon; but the fall of Babylon and the rise of the new Jerusalem are both, in history, slow, continuous, and overlapping processes, and the idea underlying the whole is

very obviously this: that the new Jerusalem is intended to bear her power on earth. Such a thought, and such a thought only, is consistent with the view of the Apocalypse that sees in it a vision, not of isolated events set forth in definite chronological order, in a manner most unlike the laws of prophecy as revealed in the whole Bible, but of the essential history of Christianity in its life in the world. And such a thought, and such a thought only, can harmonise with the double idea, that the new Jerusalem is *of* heaven, but *on* earth.

The truth is that, through the whole New Testament, but more especially in this Epistle, there is a use of the words "heaven" and "heavenly" that can hardly be called local. There is a local use also; and, in one remarkable and familiar passage, we have the two uses side by side. "Our Father, which art in heaven, . . . Thy will be done, in earth, as it is in heaven." In the original Greek, there is a curious difference in the phraseology of these two clauses. In the first, the word "heaven" is in the plural (*ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς*); in the second, in the singular (*ἐν οὐρανῷ*). Now *οὐρανός* in the singular generally means the visible sky; but the context here makes this interpretation impossible; and, on the other hand, it can hardly be maintained that the plural of the first clause and the singular of the second are identical in meaning—if for no other reason, because both versions of the Lord's Prayer preserve the distinction. The most probable interpretation seems to be that the singular in the second clause is used locally, in contrast to "earth," with which the very form of the sentence contrasts it; but that the plural is used in the first clause in a wider sense, which is not local.

So, too, when, in St. Matthew's Gospel, we read of "the kingdom of heaven," the plural is always used—*ἡ βασιλεία τῶν οὐρανῶν*. Here is little trace of a local, or at least a locally restrictive sense; for the parables of the kingdom all include the work of the Church on earth. We may therefore see that there would be nothing strange in the use of the adjective "heavenly"—*ἐπουρανίος*—by our author, without direct local reference, in connexion with what was obviously a known and accepted use of the correlative word "heaven"—generally in the plural—without local meaning, or at least with an emphasis that dwells less on that meaning than on other characteristics.

Let us now look at the use of this adjective *ἐπουρανίος* in the Epistle. It is found altogether in six passages, including our text. In iii. 1 the call to Christ is a "heavenly calling;" in vi. 4 the Holy Spirit is the "heavenly gift" (*δωρεά*, a word that in the New Testament invariably refers to the Holy Spirit); in viii. 5 and ix. 23 the "patterns" or prototypes of the Judaic ritual are called "heavenly things;" and in xi. 16 we are told (in close analogy to the phraseology of our text) that the patriarchs desired "a better country, that is, a heavenly: . . . for God hath prepared for them a city."

Now in *none* of these cases does the word mean "that which is locally in heaven." The calling is from heaven, but comes to those on earth; the Holy Spirit is the "gift," emphatically, as given to His Church on earth. The whole force of the eleventh chapter lies in its use of the "faith" of the Fathers as anticipating, not merely a "heavenly rest" for themselves, but "Jesus, the Author and Finisher of faith"—"God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." And

the description of their faith, of "the city that hath the foundations" which they looked for, of the "better country" and "the city prepared by God," lead on straight to the very words on which we are commenting. "Sion, Mountain and City of the living God, the Heavenly Jerusalem," is as fully the "city prepared by God" for them as the "kingdom that cannot be moved" received by us. "The heavenly country" is, like Mount Sion, the Church of God, and includes that Church as she is on earth, no less than as she is beyond the earth.

But why, then, is the Church called "heavenly"? For an answer to this question let us look at the two passages that remain. "There are priests . . . who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things;" "It was therefore necessary that the patterns of things in the heavens should be purified with these, but the heavenly things themselves with better sacrifices than these." In both these passages we have the same idea. The Jewish ritual was a copy—a shadow; and it was a copy or shadow of what our author calls "heavenly things."

But what are these heavenly things?

In his commentary on the Epistle, Mr. Rendall says, "He must mean the steps of man's heavenward path," giving as his reason that the author could hardly have meant us to believe that the actual contents of heaven needed purifying. But Mr. Rendall has simply failed to grasp the central thought of the whole Epistle. The reference is *not* to "the steps of man's heavenward path," nor is it to the actual contents of the local heaven, but to an absolutely different thought, the apprehension of which is necessary to anything like an understanding of the Epistle. Let us try to get hold of this thought, for in it lies the

explanation of the description of the Church as "the Heavenly Jerusalem."

As in the idea of the "City of God," so here there is a combination of elements drawn from different sources. One is Judaic, derived directly from the Old Testament—the command given to Moses, "See thou make all things after the pattern showed thee in the Mount." But the author reads this text in the light of another thought, due not to the Old Testament, but to Greek philosophy. The very remarkable and unique vocabulary of the Epistle, several isolated turns of thought, and the general drift of the argument, bear witness to his acquaintance with Hellenic philosophy, and more particularly with Platonism; and one particular Platonic conception was, in God's providence, the key that unlocked to him the meaning of the mystic "pattern" after which the tabernacle and its contents were made. This conception is the "doctrine of *ideas*." We need not enter fully into the details of this philosophic theory, for they have nothing to say to our inquiry; the final results obtained by our author were something quite different from the Platonic doctrine, though this doctrine was one of the means by which he attained them. They themselves were neither Greek nor Judaic, but Christian; they were built up out of old materials, but were, when so built up, new truth and new life.

According to the "doctrine of ideas" all the material, individual, things of earth are mere copies or shadows, each of some great reality. They are earthly, but this reality (their "idea") is heavenly. They are copies, none of them perfect, but it is perfect. No individual tree, or horse, or man sums up in itself in perfection the true excellences of its kind; these belong only to the ideal man,

or horse, or tree. Again, the things of earth are shadows—the ideas alone are real. We on earth, said Plato, are like the inhabitants of a cave, who stand ever with their backs to the daylight and the world without. The beings that belong to that outer world pass and repass, and the cave-dwellers see their shadows as they come and go—but never the real beings. Now this cave is our world, our life, and the shadows are the things of earth; but the realities are the ideas. We never know them, but, because we see their shadows, we know they are there.

It is not necessary to suppose that our author held this doctrine, as a whole; but the whole substance of his Epistle makes it very plain that he knew it. The contrast between shadow and substance—the very adjective (*ἀληθινός*) used to describe “the *true* tabernacle”—the “evidence of things not seen,” in his definition of faith—the contrast between “heavenly things” and their “copies” on earth—all point to his knowledge of the Platonic theory, though not necessarily to his acceptance of its details. Of the theory as a whole we may say that, with much grotesqueness of detail, it gives a very lively and generally true picture of the necessary imperfections of our knowledge. Of our author’s use of it, we may say that it helped him to read into a strange and difficult Old Testament passage a new meaning, resting on no fanciful inference or puerile conceit, but on the deepest realities of religion and the most pressing needs of the soul of man.

“See thou make all things after the pattern showed thee in the Mount.” The tabernacle was, then, a copy, and a copy of a model set by God.

But what was this model? The mere passing vision of an ideal temple? The material furniture of a material sanctuary, locally situated in heaven? No, but a deep spiritual reality, in which are found the analogues, not only of the fittings and furniture (which indeed he passes by with scant comment), but of the whole system embodied in the tabernacle and its worship. The "courts of the Lord's house" themselves, the privilege of worshipping there, the "defilement" that cut men off from that privilege, the sacrifice that took it away, the priest who offered that sacrifice, are all, to our author, shadows answering to a more perfect "idea." That "idea" is the real relation between the Father of spirits and the spirit of man; and, step by step, he works out the type or analogy into its details, at every step resting on spiritual realities and human needs. To him, the worshipper cut off from the Temple by defilement is an image of Man cut off from communion with God by sin; the cleansing of that worshipper's "flesh" by the sacrifice points to a greater sacrifice having power to cleanse, not merely defilement from the body, but sin from the conscience; the succession of priests, offering everlasting sacrifices in the shadow-sanctuary of Judaism, find their perfect ideal in the one everlasting High Priest. The "heavenly things" that are the model of the sanctuary served by the Jewish priests are the realities of spiritual life; and the "heavenly things" that are cleansed by the everlasting "better" sacrifice are the consciences and spirits of sinful men. In the old sanctuary, all is shadow—the taking away, by a sacrifice that does not last, of a defilement that is itself shadowy, and that returns again. In the new sanctuary (which is "heavenly")

all is real—a true sacrifice, that can reach the conscience, makes men better, brings their spirits nearer to God, and enables them to serve and worship Him.

And now he carries this thought one step further. As the Temple, and the sacrifice, and the priest of Judaism have their “heavenly” prototypes—ideal, spiritual, belonging to reality and not to shadow—so too has the Holy City where the Temple stood. And this heavenly counterpart is none other than the Church of God—the new city of which his readers were citizens, the new mountain where they dwelt under the protection of the Most High, the new Jerusalem which not only contained, but was and is, the Temple of the living God. That is “the Heavenly Jerusalem;” and the leading idea under the word “heavenly” is the position of the Church as no longer a shadow-sanctuary, but the true Temple, in which dwelt real work and real worship, and a real life of the living God. As in our Lord’s words of her, she is *τῶν οὐρανῶν*—*of the heavens*,—heavenly, real, spiritual, though on earth.

So far, however, we have only seen that the title of “heavenly,” applied to the Church, ranks her with the realities of the religious life—the real facts of man’s relation to God, in contrast to the shadows of the old covenant. But this answer opens further questions, and indeed it only brings us to the very margin of the real question at issue. Why is the Church thus reckoned among the spiritual realities, and why is this spiritual reality, even here on earth, described by the word “heavenly”?

At this stage of our inquiry, we can only generally indicate the answer to the first of these questions.

The Christian Church is real—"ideally real"—among other reasons, because she rests for her constitution and unity, not on any arbitrary, conventional, or passing bond of union, like that which bound together the Jewish nation, but on an actual unity of her members. The unity of Israel was, by its very nature, shadowy. It was the unity of a nation, to the exclusion of other nations; its fundamental idea was kinship in blood, and, on this avowed ground, it admitted Jews as members and (waiving the question of proselytes) excluded others. Now it is hardly necessary to point out that this unity was very far from being real. The Jews as a nation did not stand alone, and the bounds by which they separated themselves from the other "children of Abraham" were largely adventitious and artificial. There were many, too, reckoned among Jews, who were very obviously not of the blood of Israel. And the only absolute bond that bound together the varied races and elements that entered into the composition of the holy nation—the bond of common national life—was never fully realised; the very sacred name of Israel became the mark of national schism. Thus the unity of Israel was necessarily unreal and artificial, both as to what it included and as to what it excluded; at best, Israel was a shadowy representation of a unity that should rest on a better basis in a more certain way. But the "new Jerusalem" has for its foundation the unity, not of a nation, but of mankind; and this unity rests, not only on the common manhood of all men, but on the uniting force of Christ, who took on Him the nature of us all. Thus the Church of God is a real union, with a basis that must last; it is

founded on realities—on our common humanity, and on the oneness of Christ. But this aspect of the case must be discussed after we have considered more fully the remaining clauses of the great definition of the Church.

But why is this *reality* of the Church described as “heavenly”? The answer to this question brings out very fully the true nature of the Church.

(1) The Church is “heavenly,” to begin with, in this sense, that she is not limited to men on earth. Membership of any earthly society is dissolved by death, like the priesthood of the Aaronite under the old covenant. But the Church of God has no such law; the “Communion of Saints” reaches beyond the grave. She numbers “the spirits of just men made perfect” in her fold; so, without at present entering on the meaning of that membership of the faithful departed, it is at least plain that she is heavenly, in the sense of not being limited, like earthly societies, to the passing membership of fleeting generations, as they move across the stage of life “between a sleep and a sleep.” She belongs to man, and she claims the life of man; but man does not end with death, nor is his life finished on earth. So she, too, stretches beyond the earth, and is heavenly, in that she numbers her members among men, not only on the earth, but beyond the earth.

(2) Again, she is heavenly, in that her membership is not limited to men, alive or dead. The “angels in assembly” belong to her too, as we shall see in our next chapter; they minister on earth “to those who shall be heirs of salvation,” but they belong to heaven, and “in their assemblage” they belong there to the Church of God. So that she is

heavenly, in that she reckons in her fold the very inhabitants of heaven.

(3) So far we might perhaps say that the Church is partly of earth and partly of heaven. But, as we have seen, she is *distinctively* "heavenly," and for the explanation of her specific claim to this title we must therefore go further. Even on earth she belongs to heaven, or, rather, to "the heavens"—a phrase which, as we have seen, is not used in local contrast with "earth."

One aspect of this fact is worked out by the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews under another figure. He represents the newly made Church of God as an analogue to the Tabernacle or Temple of the Jews; and he treats the analogy almost as local. The old covenant had in its Temple the courts where worshippers gathered round the altar of the Lord, but it had also, beyond the veil, the Most Holy Place. This was out of sight of the worshipper, and trodden by the high priest alone; and yet it was the very heart and centre of the whole. Thither went the high priest with the incense and the blood of the sacrifice, and there it was that the hearts of the worshippers were—behind the veil. Now so, too, our High Priest has "passed through the heavens," into the Heaven of Heavens itself, the most holy place of God. There is the centre of all Christian worship; and, in worship, the earth itself is but the outer court of that everlasting shrine. So that the Church of God, even on earth, has her very heart and centre in heaven; she is "let down from God out of heaven," for in truth it is there—in the person of her High Priest and in His perpetual intercession—that she finds all that makes her the Church of God at all: *qua* Church,

she belongs not to earth, but to heaven. She is a kingdom with a heavenly King, a revelation of Christ whose life is in heaven, a Church whose High Priest leads her worship in the inmost holies of heaven itself. There her life is hid with Him in God; thither in heart and mind she ascends, and there with Him she dwells. For where the Head is the body is, and where the Priest is the worship is. We speak generally of the presence of Christ in the Eucharist as His presence on earth with us; but we might just as truly say that He brings us there, in our union with His intercession, into heaven with Him.

(4) So the Church of God has her foundation in heaven, and her members partly in heaven too. But there is another thought that seems to me to be also involved in this verse; and it is in some ways the most far-reaching of all.

The Church, even on earth, is "heavenly"; for all things are so, had we but the sense to perceive it. In a very terrible little poem, "The Devil's Pater-noster," Mr. Robert Buchanan illustrates how truth turned out of shape may become the most deadly error. And the fiend's prayer begins—

"Our Father who in heaven art—*not here.*"

As we have already seen, our Father is said to be, not ἐν οὐρανῷ—"limited to heaven,"—but ἐν τοῖς οὐρανοῖς—"in the heavens;" and these "heavens" are also involved in the kingdom of God on earth. Now is not the essential difference between the ungodly and the Christian view of the world and life this, that the former looks on earth as complete in itself, and the latter sees in this earth only a part of a great single realm of God? That realm is "the

heavens," and earth is a part of it ; and we have grasped little of the meaning of Christianity if we have not realised that no world of God's is more truly God's (though it may have more realisation of God's presence) than is the world we live in. So earth itself is in "the heavens," for God's universe is one, with one will of God ruling it, and one presence of God cheering it, and one life of God animating it ; and the Church is in the world, and uses the world, not as itself complete, but as a part of the kingdom of God. "Where the king is, there is the court ; and where the master sits is the head of the table." So, too, it is the presence of God that makes heaven, and its bliss comes from willing obedience to His law ; if we have that presence, and love that law, we are in His heavens even here.

I mean this in no mystic sense ; the recognition of the unity of God's kingdom, here and everywhere, is simply the acceptance of what must be true. It may be, and is, true that we can *make* this world largely an anticipation of the final reward ; but deep down under this truth is another, on which this indeed depends. The "constitution of nature" is, as Butler loved to point out, a part only of a greater scheme ; and the Providence of God deals with earth as but a section of that whole series of worlds on worlds which, in their fullness, are "the heavens" of God. And all these are one, in law, in life, in co-ordination for the working out of the same purposes of the same supreme will. In Butler's "Analogy" we find a very striking use of this thought. To the careless reader, it seems as if that great book was simply a defence of the doctrines of Natural Religion and Christianity from their conformity with what we know of nature ; but the real central

thought of the book is a much deeper one. To Butler, nature is a fragment; and the whole, of which and of which alone we can predicate unity and completeness, is a much wider world—the very world with which religion deals. The analogy on which he rests is explicable, and its explanation is, not that we can find “natural law in the spiritual world,” but that spiritual law must, from the very nature of the case, reach into the natural world. In fact, this natural world is not a whole contrasted with another whole, and perhaps analogous to it, but a part of one great whole. The natural is here and now; the spiritual is everywhere and always, but here and now because it is everywhere and always. The things that are seen are earthly, and the things that are not seen heavenly; but the things that are seen are heavenly too, so soon as we find that, in union with the things that are unseen, they belong to one law, one life, one order of God.

Now the Church of God, among men, rests on the realisation of this truth. She belongs to eternity, not to time, because she fills time as a part of eternity. She belongs to the heavens, not to the earth, because she takes the earth as a part of that wider world, the heavens of God. She belongs to all the spiritual creation, not to the daily life of man, because she takes this daily life of the few who live in this world as a part of that wider, deeper, fuller life in which the living and the dead, men and angels, all live under the one law of the one God. The world we live in is not, to her, “Maya,” as Eastern mystics phrase it—an illusion contrasted with the realities of the eternal state. It is real, as she knows it; its only unreality is its attempt to stand separate from God. So she is “heavenly,” even here; for

she is the revelation and manifestation to earth of the real life that includes earth and heaven. That is why she numbers the angels among her citizens; that is why the strange and wonderful words of the passage with which we are dealing do not hesitate to rank within the Church even the Lord Jesus Himself, in His ascended might, and even God Himself, the Father of all and Judge of all. She belongs to the infinite, but the infinite does not exclude the finite—it comprehends it; here she is limited in her sphere, but she knows that the limits are set only by the shortness of human sight and the frailty of human strength, and so she knows that her true home is the everlasting and boundless realm of God. She has not to leave earth to enter on that realm; she is in it already; it is as surely one with her life here as the world beyond the horizon is one with the world we see, though the horizon cuts the rest off from our view. Not the realm of God, but our sight, is limited; and we need no more take the Church out of the world to make her “heavenly” than we need leave the world to find our Father who is in heaven.

CHAPTER V.

THE COMPANY OF TWO ARMIES.

"Lord God of Hosts."

HITHERTO we have dealt with the Church of God only as a body on earth. She is "heavenly," to be sure; but we have just seen that this does not necessarily imply that she is in actual fact present anywhere save on earth. We have dealt with her as a society of human beings, one with Christ in His human nature — the full body of His manhood strengthened and refreshed by His flesh and blood, His human life. But the definition of the content of the Church goes much further than that, and the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews finds room within her fold for the holy angels and the happy dead—"Ye have come . . . to innumerable hosts, to the assemblage of angels."

Now it is noticeable that our author has, in the earlier part of his work, had occasion, several times, to define the position of the holy angels—never by way of mere speculation as to their nature or functions, but always in relation to some important point of the Christian revelation. He has dwelt on the essential pre-eminence of our Lord, as the everlasting Son of God, over all angels; and, in doing so, he has incidentally described their minis-

tration, for God's sake, to man. "Are they not all ministering" (doing public ministry for God) "spirits, sent forth to do service on behalf of those who shall be heirs of salvation?" He has spoken of our Lord, when made man, as being in His humiliation "a little lower than the angels." He has recorded the mediation of angels in the giving of the Mosaic Law, and has therein exemplified one part of their ministration on behalf of men; and in a quotation from Psalm civ. he has suggested their employment in the ordinary course of the natural world. So he has, bit by bit, defined their position as far lower than Christ and yet somewhat higher than man, as the servants of God employed by Him in ministering to man; and then he has left the subject of the holy angels altogether, and confined his attention to the relation of our Lord's redemption to the human race. But now, in summing up the inhabitants of the new Sion, he enumerates among them the holy angels — "innumerable hosts, the assembly of angels."

Now this membership of the "bodiless ones" (as the Greek Churches call them) in the Church of God is a thing worthy of our careful attention. It enlarges our idea of what the Church is, and leads us further back than we usually go for its foundation. We are too apt to think of the Church of God as a body resting exclusively on the redemption of man, and of its purpose as being solely the salvation of its members. But if the angels, who have not sinned, and of whom Christ has not "taken hold" to redeem them, are our fellow-members in that Church, then surely our membership in it also must lie deeper in the counsels of God than this view would seem to show. Again, we are too apt to think

of our "membership of Christ" as (so to speak) an accidental thing, traceable only to His assumption of humanity. But if the angels, who have no share of humanity, are members also of Him, we may well question whether we can limit our membership altogether to the fact of the Incarnation. Lastly, we are too apt to see in the relation of the angels to the Church simply a relation of service. But if (as it is quite possible to show) we can find that the service done "for the sake of those who shall be heirs of salvation" is only a part of the work of the angelic hosts, and even a small part, we may see reason to believe that our entrance into God's Church opens the way for us to a large and varied universe of full life unsuspected by those who limit God's purposes for them to the bare saving of their souls.

I do not intend to deal with the question as to the nature and work of the angels in general, but only in so far as it affects the question of their membership of the Church, and as this in its turn affects the meaning of our share in the same privilege. Indeed, it seems more than doubtful whether we can with profit enter any more deeply into the angelic nature than so far as it concerns ourselves; and, in any case, any further examination is outside the purpose of this book.

(1) First of all, the holy angels are our fellow-members in the Church. Their presence in the Heavenly Jerusalem can mean no less; and there are many other suggestions of the same sort in the Bible, though none other perhaps so clear. When Jacob calls the place where he met the encamped angels "Mahanaïm," a germ of this thought seems present in his mind; his own company and the angelic troop are to him "two armies" of the same

God. The "sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees," as David went up to battle; the vision of the horses and chariots of fire round Dothan, when Elisha opened the eyes of his servant; the "captain of the Lord's host" who led the children of Israel in the invasion of Canaan—all point in the same direction. They show us God's angels co-operating here on earth with men in the fight for God. But our text brings out the fact that they do so as fellow-members in the Church, and it removes altogether the possibility that they are so only as "doing service on behalf of" the human and proper members of that Church. For their membership is *πανηγύρει*—"in assembly;" and the word translated "assembly" refers to no partial or accidental gathering, but to a complete mustering of, so to speak, an official kind. As contrasted with *ἐκκλησία*, the word used for the gathering of men in God's Church, *πανήγυρις* is properly a gathering for worship or religious functions, while *ἐκκλησία* is a political legislative assemblage. So that the holy angels are here ranked as members of the Church quite apart from their service towards men; in their ordered ranks, in the gathering of their full numbers as they perform their "public service" (*λειτουργία*—i. 14), they are an essential part of the Church. So that the Church, though *one*, has yet a double life; she is the Church of men here, and the Church of the angels in heaven. And yet these are both one, so that by our membership of God's Church we are members of a society that includes both the ordered degrees and organisation of the Church on earth and the ordered degrees and organisation of the Church in heaven.

(2) Again, if the angels are members of the

Church, they must be members of Christ; they must belong to the body of Christ. This is perhaps not an easy thought to us. We trace our own membership of Christ's body to the fact that He took on Him our nature, when He was made man—not merely a nature like ours, but the very nature of each one of us. The early gloss on St. Paul's words, "We are members of His body," shows the most natural thought as to that membership—"of His flesh and of His bones." Now of course this is a true view, but it is only a partial view. He took *us* on when He took on His human nature—He took on mankind when He took on manhood; and the human body and soul and spirit of each of us have a vital union with the human body and soul and spirit of the Lord. But there is a deeper sense still, it seems to me, in which we are members of Christ; and our union with His humanity is the means, rather than the end, of His uniting work.

For the angels are members of Christ too. They must be, if they belong to the Church. For the Church is the body of Christ, and is one; so that we cannot say that part of it is the body of Christ and part is not. Again, the angels do not trace their membership in Christ to the Incarnation. The whole tenor of the New Testament seems to say that the latter had no effect on them—that it was not needed for their sakes, and that it was even unintelligible to them. "Which things the angels desire to look into." Nor is there the slightest suggestion of any other act by which there was a union made between our Lord and the holy angels at any time subsequent to their creation: "He taketh not hold of angels." So that the whole of the New Testament teaching points to the

membership of the holy angels in Christ as essential ; they were created as members of His body.

The explanation is not really difficult, and is full of meaning for ourselves. The New Testament tells us of a peculiar relation between the Everlasting Word and the Creation. He is the Agent of creation ("all things were made by Him"); but He is more than that. He is also the beginning of the Creation, and the ground of the Creation; all things were made *in* Him no less than *by* Him. He is not a creature, but He is the *possibility* of all creatures (if I may venture on a metaphysical expression that can hardly be avoided), "the first-born of every creature." I trace the same thought in St. Paul's words, "In whom dwelleth all the fullness (πλήρωμα) of the Godhead *bodily*." Life, reality, manifestation—whatsoever makes the creature to be at all—were in Him first, and remain in Him, and He gives them to the creature; and they make the creature His body—a body that is His quite apart from the Incarnation, and that was His always.

Now there are two questions arising out of this that I do not mean to discuss. It might be suggested that in this truth we have the ground of possibility and reasonableness of the Incarnation; and this is probably true, but the question is certainly out of my reach, and probably out of reach of my readers. It may be asked what relation this shows between the Everlasting Word and the inanimate creation; but the answer to this would imply metaphysical considerations as to the nature of the existence of inanimate beings that are quite outside our present scope. So that we may confine our attention altogether to spiritual beings, whom we may sum up as angels and men.

The Everlasting Word is "the first-born" in relation to angels no less than men. They were made by Him and for Him and in Him; and they belong therefore to that "body of Christ" which is His, by the very fact of creation.

But the Church is "His fullness"—the fullness of Him in whom dwelleth all the fullness of God. And this identifies the Church, as a whole, with the spiritual creation of God. We are fellow-members in it with the angels, because God made man also in Christ; there is something very much more than a play on words in Charles Kingsley's saying: "Man was made in Christ; for man was made in the image of God, and Christ is the image of God." And the building up of the Church among men by the Incarnation is thus not the beginning of a new thing for men, but the restoration of man to what he was meant to be. He is not like the angels in nature, but we shall see presently that we probably cannot for that reason exclude him from the same "order" with them. But angels and men alike were made in Christ, as members of the same body of Christ, as fellow-citizens of the same universal City of God; and the work of the Incarnation is the replacing of man in the citizenship he has lost. To revert to a distinction drawn in the first chapter, the Church on earth is the growing city that, like Rome of old, draws men into its ever-extending citizenship; but the Church as a whole is the city of all spiritual beings, as members of Christ, that is in the everlasting purpose of God.

(3) But there is one other thought that is needed to complete this view of the subject. We have spoken hitherto of "angels and men" as if we were dealing with two classes of beings, each class being

homogeneous in itself, and each being sharply contrasted with the other. Now, though it is quite true that mankind falls into one single class (for "God hath made of one blood all nations"), it is by no means so certain that we can rank all the beings whom we speak of as the holy angels in one class in the same way. And, little as Scripture tells us of the true nature of these holy ones, it yet tells us enough to give us a peep into depths on depths, full of infinite variety, and so to give us a wider view of the length and breadth and depth and height of that mighty army, that universal family, that infinite kingdom, wherein our unity with Christ has given us a part, in making us members of the Church of God.

The "bodiless ones" are not all of the same rank or of the same kind. The very name "angel" is, properly speaking, only the title of one order among many; and the names of these orders, and the manner in which they are mentioned, confirm the view of all Christian tradition, that they differ in function and in nature. In his "Christian Dogmatics," Bishop Martensen of Zealand gives reasons for believing that angels have no fullness of being; that the angel who knows only knows, the angel who worships only worships, and the angel who loves only loves. This is as it may be; I do not feel altogether satisfied with his reasoning. But it is quite certain that Scripture tells us of many kinds of beings who are generally summed up in the single word "angels"; the title in this case meaning no more than that they are spiritual beings who serve God, and that they are not men either living or dead.

It is unnecessary to dwell on the commonly accepted division, which arranges the angels in nine "orders" and these orders in three groups, further

than to point out an obvious analogy between these orders and the recognised functions and ministry of the Church on earth. For the Church is, as we have seen, a Revelation, a Kingdom, and (in the strictest sense of the word) a Church; and the three great divisions of "counsellors, rulers, and ministers" answer very closely to these three aspects of the Church. So, too, in each of these divisions there is a threefold celestial ministry; just as Israel of old had a separate triple ministry in each of these aspects of her life. It is, however, not very safe to speculate on the details of the angelic hierarchy; we know the titles of certain orders of angelic beings, but we do not know that these titles include them all, and we have little information, beyond what is afforded by the names, of the functions of each heavenly order.

But there is another point of view, from which we may profitably look at the variety of the heavenly hosts. It is a real variety. The cherubim and seraphim certainly differ, whatever may be the real nature of the difference; and each appears in Scripture as exercising functions altogether peculiar to his kind. From the first mention of the cherubim in Genesis to their last appearance as the "living creatures" of the Apocalypse, they are surrounded with mystery; in them, in fact, the mysterious wonderfulness of the living creation finds its highest expression. And it is noticeable that the writer of our Epistle turns aside from the subject after mentioning them, with words that seem to imply either his inability or his reluctance to speak at any length about it. The seraphim, whether their name signifies "burning ones" or "exalted ones" (and either meaning is possible)

“adore and burn;” and their outward form in Isaiah’s vision is different from that of the cherubim, as the mark of difference of nature or work. Both, again, differ from the “angel,” who is the messenger bearing the decrees of God to man, or the heavenly soldier of God, warring for Him against evil. Between the cherubim and seraphim at one extreme, and the angels at the other, come other ranks, known to us only by their names: thrones, dominions (κυριότητες, “lordships”), principalities (ἀρχαί, the technical Greek name for the highest magistracies), powers (ἐξουσίαι—a word more correctly translated “authorities”), and virtues (δυνάμεις, the same word that is used for the miraculous gifts of the Spirit, properly signifying “powers” or “strengths”). To these are added “archangels,” that is, chief angels. Now, without entering into the detailed meaning of these titles, and without pressing too hard the point that they show us an “order of inequality” in heaven, as is at least fairly deducible from the word “archangel,” as well as from other considerations, we may and ought to notice that they show us an “order” of another kind—the order of a great and strongly differentiated variety. Just, in fact, as the use of the plural “the heavens” takes away from our mind the idea of the world beyond as a single limited sphere, so does the description of the inhabitants of the heavens under all these titles take from us the too common idea that they are peopled by a uniform race of beings—differing perhaps in minor points, but all formed as it were on the same model, with the same character and the same work. On the contrary, the differences in the heavenly host seem to be (to use a technical word) *specific*,

or even *generic*. In presence of the variety in the heavenly host, as revealed in Ezekiel's or St. John's vision of the cherubim, Isaiah's of the seraphim, and the many apparitions of warrior or messenger-angels in the Bible, we find ourselves face to face with the thought of the holy angels as a great organisation of very different kinds of beings, adapted to different kinds of offices, and one only, so far as we know, in their common service of God and their common relation to Christ and His body, the Church. Just as the Church of God belongs to "the heavens," stretching wide over all God's worlds, so too all the inhabitants of those worlds belong to her fold; her organisation here is a part only of an organisation, vast and varied beyond anything that human imagination can grasp; and the power by which she claims to hold, and to a large extent does hold, "all sorts and conditions of men" in allegiance and combination and unity, is only a part of the same power by which she holds in perfect unity the more varied sorts and more different conditions of the most widely dissimilar spiritual beings.

Again, it is certainly not "intruding into those things that we have not seen" to take note of the plain and obvious meaning of the titles given to the various orders of celestial beings in the Old and New Testaments. These titles are either properly theirs, in which case they must certainly describe the functions of those who bear them, or are given to them in accommodation to our intellects, in which case they must be intended to carry to our minds the meanings they plainly bear. Passing by "angel," which admits of no doubt, and "cherub" and "seraph," which are decidedly doubtful, let us look

at the other names. First, we have "archangel," a word with as plain a meaning as "angel," and inferring a leadership among the angels of God. Then we find, apparently above the archangelic rank, four names, each of which implies definite authority—"thrones, dominions, principalities, powers, (or rather, "authorities"). And, lastly, we have a title of quite a different kind—"virtues," a name denoting not so much authority as the actual possession of some kind of power or might. These names seem to me to be full of teaching, and that of the most helpful kind.

For, in the first place, it is plain that the use of a continued series of titles denoting authority, and carefully-graded authority, can point only to the actual existence of that authority and of gradations in it. There be those who think that the Church of God on earth should be a spiritual republic, without organised authorities, and with the wills of its members bound together only by the common recognition of the will of God. It would not be quite fair to call this spiritual anarchism, for it recognises the rule of God's will; but, on the other hand, it leaves the determination of what this will is to either the individual conscience or the passing feeling of the members of the "Church." Most of us doubt whether, even with the utmost saintliness on earth, this would work successfully; perhaps it might succeed among angels. But this much is certain, that it is not the constitution of the angelic Church: in heaven there are "thrones and dominions and principalities and powers." In giving an organised hierarchy as a part of the plan of the Church on earth, God put us under no harder yoke than His angels bear. They see Him face to

face; they know His will: but yet they have their rulers, and these rulers bear titles of high and most responsible authority. May it not be the case that, there and here, God's authority is exercised—as the manner most in accordance with His own nature, or the needs of His creatures—*through* the powers He has Himself set in command, and that even the angels know His will, not directly, but through their own lawful rulers?

Thus the existence of authority in the Church is not confined to this world, but is its characteristic in heaven too: and the exercise of angelic authority is not inconsistent with the supremacy of God. And this may help us to understand another difficulty that we sometimes find in our way. It is often hard to realise the existence at all of God's supreme will in this world. Its governments and jurisdictions seem so complete, and the exercise of human authority so absolute, and the results among men so definitely determined by their own will and the will of whatsoever power they obey, that men can often retain their belief in God only by dismissing the whole question of the relation of human wills to the will of God as insoluble, or keep some shadowy belief in Him by observing that, in spite of man's independence, there is in the world "an Eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness." From this point of view, we are apt to represent God as *interfering* with the every-day authorities of the world to enforce His will, but as ruling in heaven, free from any intermediate wills, with direct authority on every spirit. Now I am far from saying that the effect of God's will is not more unvarying and unquestioned there than here; but it seems, at the same time, pretty certain that the reason is not the

absence of intermediate wills. We cannot believe that the "dominions and powers" are mechanical agents: and we have no reason to suppose that an outside observer would see anything less of individual rule in the exercise of their authority than in the government of this world. It is a truism to say that we do not know how God's will in everything and man's will in details can be reconciled; but the constitution of the heavenly orders shows us that it is God's nature to govern through the rule of intermediate wills.

One order remains—"δυνάμεις"; "virtues," or more properly "might" or "strengths." As we have seen, the word is the same as that used for the special gifts of the Holy Spirit, such as healing, tongues, or prophecy: and just as St. Paul ranks these special gifts after the regular ranks in the constituted ministry of the Church, so these "virtues" are always ranked after the rulers in the hosts of heaven. The same consideration may help us to understand what is meant when this name of "might" is used of an angel. It marks him not as an authority, but as the agent in mighty workings. We cannot help thinking of the text from the 104th Psalm, quoted by our author. "He maketh His angels winds, and His ministers a flame of fire" (the reference being to lightning). The allusion there is to nature as obeying God's will, and the suggestion is that this is done by angelic agency. Now whether the δυνάμεις are the agents of such forces on earth, or the forces, whatsoever they may be, that are manifested in heaven, we do not know. There is nothing absurd in the former belief, nor does the fact that the forces of nature are subject to law militate against it.

“Though He thunder by law the thunder is yet His voice.” Both those who admit and those who deny human freewill, believe that the will of man acts under law ; and, at the point where the will is in contact with nature, the action of the law is at once evident. The apple falls from the tree by the law of gravitation ; I may stop it, but only by the same law. A being with intelligence but without will would probably see no difference between the lifting of a fallen leaf from the ground by my hand and its removal by a blast of wind. But whether we admit or deny the agency of spiritual beings in the operations of nature, the presence of personal “forces” among the heavenly hosts at least enables us to realise more easily the exercise, here and in the heavens, of the Divine will amid the “forces” of life. That there is law there we have seen, and that there is force there we see now : and as we know that God does not take away law or force here, by substituting what without irreverence we may call His bare will for either, so we have good reason to believe that He does not in heaven itself.

Thus we see that the view given us in Scripture of the heavenly hosts shows us the Church of God in a very widely-extended sphere, and embracing vast numbers of members of most varied natures ; and it shows us, too, that there is more analogy than we should at first think between the Church here and in heaven, and more analogy (with all due allowance for the marring effects of sin on earth) between God’s government in both worlds. God “has constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order,” in one Church, not two ; and there is a close union between these two kinds of His creatures.

(1) First, there is unity of worship. Both Scripture and the ancient services of the Church love to dwell on this. In the Apocalypse, we see the angels and the elders, who represent the human branch of the Church, joining in one worship; and, by a connexion to which we have lost the clue, the "four living creatures" seem also connected with the Church of humanity, though they are undoubtedly the representatives of an angelic order, the mystic Cherubim. In the Apocalypse, too, we find the worship of all in heaven, as well as on earth, centring in "the Lamb as it had been slain," the perpetual oblation on the altar of heaven for the sins of the world. St. Paul's difficult allusion to the covering of a woman's head in Church "because of the angels" has probably some reference to the same idea of the unity of the angels in our worship. And, in the Holy Eucharist, we still lift up our voices "with angels and archangels and all the company of heaven" in the words that, in Isaiah's vision, the Seraphim sang one to another, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts: heaven and earth are full of Thy glory." The glory is one and the worship is one: one worship from one Church. But of this I shall have more to say in the next chapter.

(2) But there is another bond of union. A part of the *λειτουργία*, or public ministration of the angels, is their service done for our sakes on earth. Our Lord Himself gives support to the ancient belief in an angel as having special guardianship of each one of us; and He Himself, in His times of trial, "did not scorn His angel's aid." And so they are to us God's ministers of all kinds of gifts save one. In the imparting of grace, in all the work of the Spirit on the heart, they cannot well have any

part. For the grace of God, and the strength of God, and the goodness of God, come to man from a closer union than he can have with any angel—from the oneness of his manhood with the sacred manhood of the King of Angels, our Lord Jesus Christ Himself. We cannot therefore well adopt good Bishop Ken's prayer,

“Thy grace angelical instil.”

But we can sing, with the Church of God always and everywhere, of their sympathy and help.

“They come, God's messengers of love
They come from realms of peace above,
From homes of never-fading light,
From blissful mansions ever bright.

They come to watch around us here,
To soothe our sorrow, calm our fear:
Ye heavenly guides, speed not away,
God willeth you with us to stay.

But chiefly at the journey's end
’Tis yours the spirit to befriend,
And whisper to the faithful heart,
‘O Christian soul, in peace depart.’

Blest Jesu, Thou whose groans and tears
Have sanctified frail nature's fears,
To earth in bitter sorrow weighed,
Thou didst not scorn Thine angel's aid;

An angel-guard to us supply
When on the bed of death we lie;
And by thine own Almighty power,
Oh shield us in the last dread hour.”

And so they and we unite in the worship and the work of the One God, King of angels and of men, in the One Church in which angels and men are alike members, the city of God in which men and angels are both fellow-citizens.

CHAPTER VI.

THE CHURCH OF THE FIRST-BORN.

"Praise the Lord in the great congregation."

THE clause that heads this chapter, with the words immediately following, is the most difficult in the whole description. It contains several words either unique in the New Testament or used in a unique sense; and its meaning, naturally open to several interpretations, gains little light from either the immediate context or other parts of Scripture. In offering an interpretation of it, I therefore write with all due modesty, and profess no more than to give the interpretation that most commends itself to myself and the reasons that lead me to prefer this interpretation.

Who are "the first-born"? And what is their "Church," or assembly? And what is meant when we are told that they are "enrolled in the heavens"?

The answer to the first of these questions is rendered difficult by the fact that the title "first-born" is nowhere else (except in chap. xi. 28, of this Epistle, which is nothing to the point) used in the New Testament in the plural, or in any way save in relation to our Lord. Of Him the Greek word is used in four different senses, being sometimes translated "first-

born" and sometimes "first-begotten." In His human birth, He is spoken of as His mother's first-born, not in any necessary relation to other children, but in direct connexion with the privileges and peculiar position of the eldest son. In relation to His Godhead, while He is the "Only-begotten of the Father," He is also called, in reference to that relation of His Being to the creation of which I spoke in the last chapter, the "first-born of all creation" (Col. i. 15). In relation to our salvation, accomplished by the building up of men in His Image, He is called (Rom. viii. 29) "the first-born among many brethren." Lastly, in His resurrection, He is called (Col. i. 18, and Rev. i. 5) "the first-born of the dead." And the writer of our Epistle knew the word as a title of Christ: indeed, from the manner in which in his first chapter he uses it *absolutely* to describe Him, it would seem as if it had already, when he wrote, passed into common use as an accepted name of the Saviour.

But here he uses the name for others than Christ. Who are they?

(1) The commonest suggestion is that they are the dead; and, as "the spirits of just men made perfect" are obviously also the dead, an explanation of the two phrases is found by interpreting the latter of the Old Testament worthies, and the former of the spirits of departed Christians. The description that follows "who are enrolled in heaven," has doubtless helped to support this interpretation, being read as meaning "who have received their reward in heaven." But there are many and, in my opinion, fatal difficulties in the way of this view. Being "enrolled in heaven" is not the same thing as being present in heaven: indeed, as we shall see presently, the force of the words really tells the other way. Again, though

doubtless there is a certain appropriateness in speaking of the Christians who first died as "first-born," as having passed into a better life, before their fellows, through the gate of death, yet this way of speaking is not in the least in the manner of the New Testament writers. They rather look forward to the resurrection as the birth into a new life: and they certainly nowhere speak of a human spirit as "in heaven" before the Last Day. Nor do we know enough of the state of the dead between death and judgment to justify us in calling them an "ἐκκλησία"; their state may be social, but we have no warrant that it is, and it is at least as possible that it is purely reflective. Finally, if this clause refers to the dead, we have to face the difficulty that, among all the members of the Church to which the author says his hearers had come, their living fellow-Christians are nowhere mentioned.

(2) The last difficulty would also apply to the second view—that "the Church of the first-born" means the assemblage of *risen* Christians, their title being derived from their position as sharers of His heirship with Christ, "the first-born from the dead." But, besides this, there are other grave objections to this theory. Since our Lord is called "the first-born from the dead" in reference to the resurrection having begun in Him, to extend the title to others is to evacuate it of definite meaning. And, besides, the readers of the Epistle had certainly not "come" to an assemblage that did not even as yet exist, nor will exist till they too shall belong to it.

(3) There remains one more view, and it seems to me the true one. The "Church of the first-born" is the Church on earth, composed of living

Christians. Besides the fact that the context demands the mention of the living somewhere among the citizens of the heavenly Sion, this view best explains the peculiarities of the passage. Several things seem to combine, in the writer's mind, to lead him to call the living members of the Church *πρωτοτόκοι*. A few verses before, he had warned his readers against being like Esau, who sold his "birthright"; and this word "birthright" means "rights of the first-born" (*πρωτοτόκια*). Thus, quite naturally, he alludes to Christians as those who possess this birthright—*πρωτοτόκοι*. And he can hardly fail, in thus using the word, to think of the facts that made it an appropriate title. For the first-born was, legally, priest and heir; and the members of Christ's Church are "kings and priests," "heirs of God and fellow-heirs with Christ." Again, there is a very marked analogy between the position of Christ in relation to the Church, and that of the Church in relation to the world. He is the first-fruits, and His people are a kind of first-fruits of His creatures: He is the first-born of our salvation, and our salvation—in a manner all the more marked in the infant Church—is but a step towards wider things: the Church and its members are the "first-born" in a world for all of which Christ gave Himself, and to all of which that Church brings the message of salvation.

Nor is the title, in this sense, without parallel. "Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, my first-born." May not some echo of these words have rung in the ears of one who knew his Old Testament so closely as the writer of this Epistle did, when he chose the same title for the children of the New Israel of God?

These "first-born" are also said to be "enrolled in the heavens." We have already had occasion to speak of another passage which suggests the thought that our author was acquainted with and was quoting the Apocalypse; and this might raise the same idea. For it recalls that "book of life" that fills so prominent a place in the Revelation; and it might easily be believed that the writer was referring to this heavenly roll. But the attempt to establish the reference is elusive: here, as before, we find a similar parallel in the Pauline epistles, and the probability is rather that, like the Heavenly Jerusalem, the Book of Life¹ was a familiar idea in the early Christian Church. And our text seems to suggest the fundamental thought underlying this idea.

The first-born are "*enrolled* in the heavens." The word for "enrolled" is technical; it is used nowhere else in the New Testament except in relation to the Roman census. This census was something more than a numbering, it was a reference of every man to his own city, for the registration of his civic rights. And here it seems to mean that those who are "enrolled in the heavens" are, as it were, registered as belonging to that great city-state of which our author is writing, whose sphere is, as we have seen, "the heavens," in a sense that

¹ "The books were opened, and another book was opened, which is the book of life." From the character of the Apocalypse and the fact that "the books" of the Judgment are pretty certainly an echo of the prophet Daniel, one is led to look for an Old Testament origin of the "book of life," both in this passage and in its general use in the early Church. It is most probably derived from the words of Malachi (iii. 16). "Then they that feared the Lord spake one with another, and a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon His name."

includes this earth, and whose name is the Church of God. Their names are "written in the Lamb's book of life"; but this book is not a record of those who have received, or shall receive, a judgment of salvation. It is the register of the heavenly city, and as such both St. Paul and St. John treat it. For St. Paul uses this very phrase of living men and women, whose work was not yet done and who might yet fail of their reward; and St. John speaks of "blotting his name from the book of life." So that, as has been already said, the reference to enrolment in the heavens strengthens the view that these words are a description of the Church on earth among living men. We can hardly fail to grasp the reference to that "laver of regeneration" in which the membership of each churchman begins, and to the "name" that is the mark of that membership here and hereafter, in all his everlasting life in the heavens in which he is there enrolled, in all the eternity of his citizenship in the Heavenly Jerusalem.

But this body of "first-born enrolled in the heavens" is described as a "Church"—ἐκκλησία. It is a curious fact that the two distinctive names for the two chief kinds of assembly among the Greeks are used to distinguish the assemblies, respectively, of angels and men; for while that of the holy angels is called πανήγυρις, a gathering for worship, that of men is called ἐκκλησία, a gathering for legislation and purposes of government. Thus the latter word emphasises the position of the Church of God on earth as what we have called a "kingdom," a self-governing body, organised, united, and with power of legislating for itself. Ἐκκλησία can mean no less.

But it may mean more, and there is independent evidence, from the New Testament, that long before the date of the Epistle of the Hebrews the assemblage of Christians contained in itself the two elements involved in these two titles; the Church among men, as well as among the angels, was *πανήγυρις* as well as *ἐκκλησία*. If it were the latter at the Synod of Jerusalem, it was the former in the upper room by the river side where Christians went for "the breaking of the bread and the prayers." If it were *ἐκκλησία* when it sat in judgment on its members and bid them, after our Lord's injunction, "hear the Church," it was *πανήγυρις* in the gatherings at Corinth described by St. Paul, when men met to receive the cup of blessing and the broken bread which were a partaking of the Blood of Christ and the Body of Christ. And the one name "*Ecclesia*" came to be applied to the Church as, in her public congress, she fulfilled her three great functions of teaching, government and worship, just as her ministers came to blend under the single title of "Priest" the functions from which they derived, not only this name, but those also of Presbyter and Prophet. We have already considered the Church of God as a revelation or teaching power, and as a kingdom or organised ruling power; under this head we can most profitably consider her as, in the truest sense, a "Church"—an organisation for the *worship* of God.

An organisation, and for worship. Now there are many things in religion that may be said to belong to the individual, and to be (as the phrase goes) "between him and his God"; but beside and beyond there is another element, which is worship proper, and which has a special relation to "the

whole body of the Church." For deep down under all prayer, and praise, and learning of God, there is something that is needed to put all these in their right light, and to bring the one who prays or praises or learns into that condition in which those divine services can be of any use to him. This is "worship"—the solemn recognition of God's authority, the surrender of self to Him, the endeavour to bring the whole nature under His sway. If this be not the idea originally underlying sacrifice—which was probably much simpler, and belonged to an earlier form of religious instinct—it was at least the idea that, in the development of Jewish thought, as God prepared man for Christianity, and in the development, too, of many heathen religions, came to be indissolubly associated with sacrifice. And it is the fundamental idea underlying that which is the distinctive act of Christian worship, the Sacrament of Holy Communion. This is not only a means of grace for ourselves—a means of acquiring strength for ourselves from the life of Christ; but over and above all this it is an act of sacrifice to God, as well in other ways as because we there surrender ourselves to Him, to His will, to His life, to His love. And it is in its nature as a sacrifice that we find the root of its power as a means of grace; the life must be lost before it can be found, and given up to God before it can be filled with the life of God. When we speak of the Church as the *ἐκκλησία* of God we mean something more than that she is an organised society, whose life consists in the united hopes, desires, aspirations, and intentions of her members, who are one by virtue of their union in common beliefs and common interests. It cannot be too strongly in-

sisted on that the Church is more than this, and her life is more than this. She has a life that is higher than that of her members, she has a unity that is not of their making, she has a power that is more than the mere combination of their wills. They do not constitute her, but are built into her; and if it be true that she is stronger for each member's life that is given to her, it is also true that the life he brings to her strengthening is a life that he finds in her, and that is a new life in him from his union with her. The central point of this union, this life, is Holy Communion, in which we offer ourselves to God in the sacrifice of Christ, and receive ourselves back from God enriched with the life of Christ; "we dwell in Him" first, and then "He in us." This is worship, the drawing nigh of the spirit to God, the home and Father of spirits, in the offering of ourselves to God, and the drawing nigh of God to the spirit, that it may live by God's life, and yet only so far as it has been given to Him. And it is in its perfect embodiment of this idea in its various stages that Holy Communion is worship, and a sacrifice, and the fullest expression of what we mean when we speak of the life of the Church. This is so important that I may be pardoned for tracing it out in detail.

(1) First of all, Holy Communion is definitely connected with the sacrifice of Christ. There are certain questions as to the meaning of His offering of Himself that we may lay aside; we are not concerned now, for example, with the question as to "equivalence," or forensic justification, or the relation of our Lord's death to the penalty of sin. Speaking for myself, I do not find these ideas in Scripture, and Dr. Neale emphatically denies that

they are to be found in any Eastern Liturgy. But we may let this pass, for none of these ideas, at any rate, is essentially involved in the Eucharist. The one thought there as to the sacrifice of Christ is that it was an offering of Himself to God—an offering of His life in the perfect surrender of death, an offering that was a satisfaction for the sins of the whole world. But, again, this sacrifice did not consist in the mere moment of death. Our Lord offered *Himself*, and the sacrifice can neither be repeated nor made to cease. In the Apocalypse of St. John, the "Lamb as it had been slain" is still on the heavenly altar, as a perpetual oblation for the sins of the world. So we may lay aside a whole series of other questions, which concern the *nature* of the presence in Holy Communion; this much at least expresses, I believe, the common views of most churchmen, that in the Eucharist we plead the sacrifice of Christ—that this sacrifice was offered in His death, but did not then cease—and that it is its relation to this great eternal sacrifice that constitutes the meaning, the inner life, the reality, of Holy Communion. We present and spread forth before God—

"That only offering perfect in His eyes,
The one true, pure, immortal, sacrifice:"

pleading on earth, in union with Him as He pleads in heaven, that which is not only past history but living fact, pleading not only the offering of Christ, but Christ Himself, the ever-living sacrifice.

(2) For, as we have seen, the sacrifice was never made to cease. It abolished all other offerings, but it did not abolish itself. It is not only written of Him that "He liveth," but that "He liveth and was dead" (*ἐγενόμην νεκρός*—"I became a dead man"),

"and is alive for evermore;" but He is alive as "the Lamb as it had been slain," for what death made Him to be that He still is. He has carried on into that renewed life all that He found in death; He *is* the sacrifice. That new 'life was found, if one may so say, in death. As we shall see presently, the remembrance of this has an important bearing on the meaning of Holy Communion. We plead the living Christ; there is indeed no other Christ whom we can plead. But we plead Him as Christ the Sacrifice—as Christ who is still, essentially, the Christ that died.

(3) But, in thus pleading Christ, we come as members of Christ; otherwise, we have no part or lot in the offering. The unbaptized are shut out from the altar. We do not come there to be made, but that we may be—may truly be and continue to be—members of Christ. In baptism we have been "made partakers of His death," and in the mystic offering of Christ in Holy Communion we thus *offer ourselves*. Perhaps this may be made a little plainer; for there are two distinct senses, in Holy Communion, in which we are one with Christ. We draw nigh to it, one with Him already. He took on our nature in the Incarnation; He was one with us while He fought with temptation and was being "made perfect by suffering." We were drawn into this unity in our baptism, and we go to Holy Communion as members of Him in this sense. We plead His sacrifice, and this involves our own. It is worth noticing, in this connexion, that the place of the "offering of ourselves, our souls and bodies," in the ancient office, is *before* the Communion of the faithful, and in close union with the actual consecration. Being

members of Christ, we *cannot* offer the remembrance of His sacrifice without being ourselves included in it.

(4) This is made plainer, when we consider what our *outward* offering is. It is bread and wine—our own, the food of our bodies, the physical source of strength, the symbols of our very life. It was ours, but in the offering it ceases to be ours, and is given up to God. Again, it is “one loaf”—and so it figures something more than the mere offering of each individual life to God; and it is the remembrance of Christ’s Body broken and His Blood shed, so that it figures, at any rate, the offering of Him. Thus it combines in one great act the offering of Christ, and of ourselves as members of Him, and of ourselves as thereby members of one another. It is the offering of herself, with her Head and Husband’s offering of Himself, by the body and bride of Christ, which is the Church of God. Thus the life of the Church of God, as figured in Holy Communion, is not only the united lives of her members, but the one life that belongs to them by the baptism that is one, though administered separately to each—even the life of Christ that makes them one.

(5) But the Eucharist does not end with the consecration and the double oblation: first, of the elements as merely something that is ours, given to be used for God, and afterwards in the great act in which we take our part in the one perfect oblation, and offer and present ourselves, our souls and bodies, in union with the sacrifice of Christ. This is followed by *Communion* proper; the feast of the sacrifice. And here, again, the outward history of the elements shadows out to our minds

the inner meaning. They have been ours, and they again become ours, but not as before. They are no longer *mere* bread and wine, but come back to us from God; our offerings to Him have become His gifts to us. And they come back in some sense charged with new power, new life—with the fruits of Christ's sacrifice. As He, and we, and the outward matter of the Sacrament were all concerned in the offering, so are they all in the feast; all have been given to God, each in the degree in which it is capable of being an offering, and each is received back from God. We lost ourselves, gave ourselves, spent ourselves in union with the sacrifice of Christ; we find ourselves, receive ourselves, are restored to ourselves by the life of Christ "who liveth and was dead."

(6) Thus we are, in a fresh sense, partakers of Christ. He who took on our nature gives us His nature; He who made us partakers of His death makes us partakers of His Resurrection. We come, as being one with Him in the life that He laid down; but we are made, in that feast, one with Him in the power of the life that He took again, the life that had passed through death. So we may say that the sacrifice of Holy Communion is the remembrance of the death of Christ, but in the feast we are partakers of the living Christ. God receives from us, in a mystery, what He received from our Master, but He gives us, in a mystery, what He gave to Him. It is the mystery of death lying between life and life; yet so that the second life is not merely the first returned, but the first given back as a better thing by God.

(7) And here, again, the gift is not only to the individual, but to the individual in unity with the

Church. Just as the Church has offered herself in the oblation, so she receives back life for herself in the feast; we are "one body, so far as we are partakers of the one loaf." Each eats and drinks, but all together, and all from one board and one loaf; and even as we began the Sacrament in the unity of the Body of Christ, so, by the life of His flesh and blood, we are made one body more fully and more closely and with the power of His risen life. We laid down self on the altar, giving ourselves to God. We laid down even our union in our own power, for the Church offered herself there; we receive back a better self, in a better union, when God gives back our gifts.

(8) In our own Liturgy there remains one more part in the great sacrifice. By what some call a liturgic blunder, the Communion is *followed* by the Prayer of Sacrifice; and it is at this point that, in the ritual of the Church of England, priest and people "offer ourselves, our souls and bodies," as "a living sacrifice," "which is our reasonable service." But if it be an error in liturgics to place this prayer at this stage of the service, it is an error that teaches truth. The life given back is God's life, of no use save to use for God. God has given us back ourselves, but selves that desire to be offered. We have sought Him as death, and now we seek Him as life; we have drawn nigh to give up ourselves, and lo, He has given us Himself; and the service is crowned and completed by the willing and "reasonable" service of laying at His feet, for His use, the lives that have no meaning and no reason in them save in Him. And this new sacrifice is also that of the Church, who offers herself, with Christ's own life in her, for the Master's service.

So we find that the Church of God is a worshipping society, and that she has her chief act of worship in the Holy Eucharist. So closely is she related to that Sacrament that she is herself sacramental. As the Bishop of Mississippi has pointed out, she has an outward form, that of a visible society, and an inward grace, her inner life that is of Christ and is given to us by Christ; she was ordained by Christ Himself, as the means for receiving that life; and in her continued existence she is God's pledge to assure us of it. We may think of her, and rightly, as God's kingdom; we may hear her, and rightly, as a great teacher sent by God; but, essentially and even more than these, she is the embodiment of the worship of God. In her worship, we who have been made one in Christ draw nigh to God, that He may draw nigh to us; we "empty ourselves" of self, that He may "fill us" with a better life and give us better selves; we are more fully made one by Christ's very life given to us. We worship in the great sacrifice that we may be enabled to live in the life in which the Church, living by and for God, is a perpetual sacrifice. For work is a sacrifice, as well as worship; and in the Church's worship both these ideas meet. We draw nigh to God, that He may make us what He meant us to be, so that we may be able to do what He meant us to do. And in the unity of His Church we find ourselves restored to our part in the work of the universe, side by side with the holy angels, who are also in unity, just as by His life given to us we are put back into the position He meant us to have in His universe, that we may be able to do His work.

There are two further questions, that we can hardly pass by when we speak of the great embodiment of

the worship of the Church in the Eucharist. Is this *only* belonging to the Church on earth? And has the worship that is offered apart from the great Sacrament, by those who have no belief in it, or who have separated themselves from the communion of the Church, any relation to this highest worship? Let us take these two questions separately.

(1) The Church, as we have seen, is one, in earth and heaven. The holy angels share with us in our worship here; they and we are one Church, not two. But surely, it may be thought, the Sacrament of Holy Communion can have no relation to them, and, resting as it does on the Incarnation, the bodiless ones can have no part in its blessings. They who are pure spirits cannot be fed and strengthened by the Body and Blood of Christ; they who have not sinned cannot need to plead the sacrifice of Christ.

No; and yet we can hardly avoid believing that they and we are one in worship, and in that great act most of all. The thought is embedded in the canon of the Liturgy, and is certainly in accordance with the mind of the Church. But we can find a better foundation for it than that. In the Apocalypse, as we have already seen, men and angels join in worship, and the heavenly adoration, like the earthly, centres in the "Lamb as it had been slain." In the great vision of the ritual of heaven, the cherubim join with the "elders," who represent the human element in the Church, in leading the worship; and angels minister at the heavenly altar, and, most markedly, join in the great hymn of praise to the mystic Lamb. The cherubim and the elders both offer the "incense, which is the prayers of saints;" the cherubim and the elders begin the

Eucharistic hymn, which is taken up by the angels first, and then by every creature on earth—"and the four living creatures said, Amen." But what share can the hosts of heaven have in the worship that seems to belong, characteristically, to those who share the humanity of Christ, by which they draw nigh for the strength that comes from that humanity, His Body and His Blood?

No share whatsoever, if this were a full account of the matter. But we have already seen that the holy angels are a part of the Church, and therefore of the body of Christ. We have seen that they, as well as we, were created in Him, and that He is the "first-born" of all creation, not only of man. The Church—the whole Church, including angels and men—is His "fullness"; and, if words mean anything and the laws of reason have any place in divinity, we cannot well avoid believing that the angels, no less than we, find their life and strength in Christ, by whom and in whom they are created. And I think we can see grounds for believing that, in its deepest nature, the Holy Eucharist has a meaning for them as well as for us.

(a) It has a meaning in relation to the sacrifice of Christ. In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the very essence of Christ's sacrifice is said to have been His obedience. "Sacrifice and offering, &c., thou wouldest not. . . . Then said I, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of me) to do Thy will, O God. . . . He taketh away the first" (the shadow sacrifices of the law) "that he may establish the second" (the doing of God's will). "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the Body of Jesus Christ once for all." That is to say, we men are sanctified through Christ's obedience,

and the offering of His Body in death is the means thereto; but that which sanctifies us is the obedience that was thus consummated. Now the angels are not sanctified "by the offering of His Body;" but it does not follow that they are not sanctified by His obedience. That obedience was from everlasting, a part of His very nature as the Son, and His nature as the Son of God is the ground of all creation; it is the very ground of possibility for the obedience of His creatures. He is the Priest from everlasting, and this is His sacrifice to the Father from all eternity; and it is in this thought that, I believe, we must find the eternal root of the atonement made by "the Lamb slain before eternal times." Surely the holy angels, no less than we, plead the obedience¹ of Christ to God; not *instead* of their own, but as the ground of possibility of their own. And surely this is essentially the same thing as our pleading of His sacrifice in the Eucharist.

(β) So, too, it has a meaning in relation to the worshippers' offering of themselves. Angels, no less than men, must find the essence of their worship in self-surrender; and angels, no less than men, must make this surrender in union with the self-surrender of Christ. To them His death is but one sign, one part, of His whole obedience, and not, as to us, the act that restored to us the possibility of obeying God; but they are His², as we are, and in the remembrance of the obedience that was shown

¹ Technically, the relation of the Son to the Father before or apart from the Incarnation, is "subordination," not "obedience"; the submission of His Person to the Father's, under one Divine will, not of His (human) will to the will of God. But the practical result is the same in both cases.

² See Col. i. 20.

in His death, they may well offer themselves in unity with Him who obeyed.

(γ) Nor can I see that they have not, in one way at least, a very real share in the Eucharist as a thank-offering. As we have seen, the Church of God as a whole makes oblation of herself there, in union with the offering of Christ. We give thanks for our restoration to union with God, but have others besides ourselves no interest in that restoration? "There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth"—not only the joy of sympathy, but the joy of reunion. The return of the prodigal is a glad thing for him, but no less glad for those who loved and lost him. The holy angels have reason to join in our thank-offering. For the Church of God was from the beginning of creation, and for the restoration of men to their place in it those who are restored and those to whom they are restored have like cause of thanksgiving.

(δ) We cannot say that Holy Communion is a means of strength to the angels, as it is to us; but we can be quite sure that He who strengthens us there with his life strengthens them too, and in some sense with His own life. We may assign to the needs of our own nature the special means employed, but the end to be gained by them is a need of all natures that are less than Divine; so that what we seek in the Eucharist for ourselves must be sought in some way by all—by the Church of heaven no less than the Church on earth. Our need for the Heavenly Food itself will not end at death; afterwards, too, "the Lamb that is in the midst of the throne shall feed" us; and the life of Christ is the strength of all His Church, in earth and heaven.

So we may well believe that the Holy Eucharist is the worship of the whole Church ; though it be not to the angels just what it is to us, its very heart and life and inmost meaning have a real relation to them no less than to us.

(2) The other question is in some ways a difficult one ; but it, too, is capable of at least an approximate answer. We cannot believe, nor are we called on either by Scripture or the Church to believe, that all worship is unacceptable to God, unless it be offered in direct connexion with the Eucharistic offering. But yet, if the Eucharist be the central act of Christian worship, and if in it be embodied the worship, not only of the Church on earth, but of the whole Church, catholic in the highest sense, that fills both earth and heaven, it is hard to see how there can be any worship apart from it. On the one hand, we may ask, Can we believe that any sincere worship is unaccepted by God ? On the other, If Christ be indeed the Head of all creation, so that the obedience of all creation centres in Him, and the religious strength of all creation comes from Him, can we believe that man can find any way of obedience save through His sacrifice, or any strength save from His life ? And Scripture and reason alike forbid our answering either of these questions in the affirmative. "In every nation, he that worketh righteousness is accepted before Him." And yet "There is none other name given unto men by which they may be saved, save the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The truth is, these two beliefs are not in any way mutually contradictory. As we have seen, the Church is sacramental in her nature, and it is a law of sacraments that, while the inner life accompanies

the outward part, the life is not so limited that it cannot be given without that part, though the outward part be the normal method of obtaining it. For the outward part is itself necessarily bound by our limitations here, but the grace of God is not bound. We have already had occasion to use this same thought to throw light on the sense in which the holy angels join in Eucharistic worship; and it may help us to understand how many outside the Church may join too in the reality of that worship, though prejudice or any of a hundred causes may keep them from the outward part.

(a) First of all, the inward reality of the Church is not limited by her outward form. Those who are out of communion with her, though they cannot have the fullness of her life, and though their separation from her may hurt both themselves and her, may yet have a share in her inmost life and worship. The life of the Church is what we sum up in one word as Christianity, and Christianity just means *Christ*—Christ as the law and strength and life of man. "He that hath the Son hath life;" and we dare not deny that even a heathen may have Christ. He may have Christ through the light of his own religion, or through other means; but whatsoever light he has comes from "the light that lighteneth every man," and whatsoever life he has comes from the Lord of life. We say that he cannot be saved save by Christ, but not that he cannot be saved as a heathen; so we do not put heathenism out of the reach of the life of Christ. And if the inner meaning of the Church, the life that is her "inward grace," can thus pierce beyond her outward communion into heathendom itself, who can dare to deny a share in that life to those who

are outside her borders, but worship the same God and trust in the same salvation? That we cannot join them in outward worship is only to say that we cannot, because they have cast aside the outward part, throw it away ourselves. But we dare not deny that God gives them blessing, or refuse to believe that, beyond the grave, they shall be drawn into the whole life, in both outward and inward unity.

(β) Again, the inward reality of sacramental worship or sacramental grace is not limited by the outward and visible part. The essence, as we have seen, of the one is the pleading of the sacrifice of Christ; the essence of the other is the seeking of strength from His life. And many who do not kneel at our altars may yet join in that worship and seek grace from that very source. Their absence hurts both us and themselves; but they are not willing rebels, and we cannot say that they are clean cut off from either the worship or the grace.

So, when we offer the Eucharistic oblation and draw nigh to the holy feast, the Church as a whole pleads Christ's obedience, and offers herself therewith. And in herself she offers the whole body of mankind, which is hers by right—and hers in fact, too, in the deepest reality, wheresoever the life of Christ is among them. And there rise up to heaven, as the prayers of all Israel of old went up with the incense, the prayers and praises of God's people, and all Godward thoughts and high aspirations of all men who seek for Christ's life, or for the life that is Christ's though they know not His name. And He whom we plead as our sacrifice becomes our strength, but yet not so that He is *only* a personal strengthener to each; the life that He gives belongs

to His whole Church too, and flows from the Head to the members. By the outward signs we seek and find it; not by those signs, but yet in some reference to the reality that is with them, His angels seek and find it. And those who seek will somehow find, for He will find them; and their worship and all true adoration and seeking for God is offered at the heavenly altar of which ours is a shadow, with the smoke of the heavenly censer and the odours, which are the prayers of saints.

CHAPTER VII.

THE GREAT JUDGE.

"The Lord is King, be the people never so impatient."

THE next words are remarkable in two ways. Their position in the description is peculiar, and they are strange in themselves. It is strange that we should find the name of the great God Himself among the contents of the City of God; it is almost stranger that we should find it occurring after the names of angels and living men, but before the great concourse of the dead. Nor can we set down the order of this clause as an accident, due to oversight or careless editing (as one would say of a modern work); the whole description is far too carefully balanced and the whole book too carefully written to make such an explanation even slightly probable.

A possible explanation is suggested by the ordinary translation, as given in both the Authorised and Revised Versions—"to God the Judge of all." The work of God as "the Judge of quick and dead," in the sense in which the word is used in ordinary language, seems to connect the living who shall be judged with the dead whose judgment is over. But this explanation will not bear examination.

It is not in accordance with New Testament usage to speak of the Everlasting Father as Judge, in relation to "the great assize"; and both the absolute use of the name "God" and the context make it certain that these words are spoken of the Father. And it is certainly not in accordance with New Testament teaching to treat the judgment as over for the dead any more than the living. If the reference, then, be to the coming judgment, the phraseology is at least unusual and the position of the clause absolutely unintelligible. And there is another objection to this explanation. All the rest of the description refers to *present fact*; the "ye have come" of its opening words applies to the whole. But the Day of Judgment is not a present fact, but an expectation; the Church awaits it, but has not come to it.

The fact is that the usual translation is incorrect; *κριτὴ θεῷ πάντων*, as Bishop Westcott has pointed out, cannot, from the order of the words, mean anything but "the God of all as Judge." Thus the force of the words implies, not that the members of the Church had come to God as the One who was to judge all, but rather that they had come to Him who was God of *all* as in some special sense *their* Judge; and the explanation of the position of the words is to be found in their application to the Church militant in some way in which we cannot apply them to the Church expectant.

In considering the special sense in which the word *κριτής* is here used we must notice another point. The whole description is given to Jews, and in close connexion with the thought of their nation and its history; and it is given to Jews who knew the Septuagint by a writer who himself

habitually used that version. To such an author and such readers the thought of judgment, in our sense of the word, would be perhaps the very last thought associated with *κριτής*. The Hebrew "judge" was a ruler, a lawgiver, a magistrate; the *Shophetim* of the Book of Judges were as definitely chief magistrates as the similarly named officials in the Punic cities. Nor was the title lost in later days; through the Psalms and the Prophets we still find it used as the name of the rulers of Israel, and the king himself is reckoned among the judges. So it seems to me that the thought in this passage is not of coming judgment, but of present rule; the Church and the world, the living and the dead, shall be judged, but "the God of all" is in some sense Lawgiver and Ruler in the Church and among the living in which we cannot assert that He is Lawgiver and Ruler in the world and among the dead.

We shall soon see what this sense seems to be; but for the present we may note that "Ye are come . . . to the God of all as Judge" means "Ye who have come to the City of God have there found Him who is the God of all as your Lawgiver and your Ruler." He is the Chief of the "city," the Head of the "assembly," the Ruler of the "Church"; and this fact is a part of that Church's living constitution. Up to this point, she is described in terms that definitely state her organised unity, and so connect her with this single headship of God; in the next clause, these terms are dropped, and the spirits of the dead are spoken of in a manner that, while it asserts their membership of and therefore unity in the Church, makes no statement as to their having any other bond of

unity with each other. All—the holy angels, the living, and the dead—are members of one City of God. The angels are, moreover, united in their own *πανήγυρις*, and the living members of the Church in their own *ἐκκλησία*. But there is no similar attempt to exhibit the dead as a unity in themselves. In the next chapter we shall see what this probably means; but it is necessary to point it out now, as it has a relation to the fact that God is spoken of as *κριτής* in the *ἐκκλησία* of the living in such a manner as to separate them in thought from the dead.

But, again, there is a very close connexion between the names of the two organised unities that precede this clause, the natural order of the words being altered, so as to throw the words *πανήγυρις* and *ἐκκλησία* into close contact with each other. We can hardly fail to notice the bearing of this fact on this new clause. It seems to imply that God is Judge or Ruler in the Church on earth in the same manner as He is in the assemblage of the holy angels in heaven; or, rather, that God is *accepted* as Ruler in the terrestrial Church in the same manner as He is admittedly Ruler in the celestial. It thus draws these two assemblies, already united, still closer together, by the thought of their having one Ruler and one law. From this point of view, it forms a close parallel to our Lord's words in the Paternoster, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven."

The Church is, then, an organisation under the recognised rule of God. He rules everywhere, but His authority is not everywhere acknowledged. There are other organisations, but they are not recognised as depending on Him. Man living for

himself, without conscious union with others, is ruled by either his own passions, appetites, affections, as each can prove itself strongest, or by deliberate self-love. Men in organised union with one another are ruled by the ends for which they unite—societies for their several purposes, states for the material benefit of their members; and the law of each society and state is framed according to the will of its members with reference to its special purpose. But the Church is an organisation for the service of God, governed by the law of God. So, too, societies and states are necessarily limited in their membership, but the Church of God belongs to all men, for its conditions of membership are common to all. Thus the Church, in which "the God of all is Judge," is in her purpose the organised union of all mankind: as belonging to God, for God's service, and under God's law. From this definition we may indeed trace out almost all her characteristics. She is visible, because man and the work of man are visible. She is one, because God is one, and because mankind is one. Her authority rests on her recognition of the authority of God; her everlasting life on her embodiment of the facts as to man that, amid all differences and among all changes, are fundamental, universal, and unchangeable. She comes to those who are not her members, not seeking to acquire a right to their loyalty, but striving to bring them to the recognition of rights, both hers and theirs, that already exist. From her relation to God on the one hand, and to universal humanity on the other, she is not only the mother of her own members, but "the mother of us all;" and even as men are before baptism "children of God," so are they her children too. And so, in a very real sense, she

makes no new claims on men, and calls for no new duties; for all her claims depend on the real relations between the God of all and all mankind.

(1) This being so, we can see the real reason why it is impossible to sacrifice the claim involved in the idea of her "establishment"—the claim to make the law she lives by supreme in the councils of the nation no less than in the life of the individual. We have already seen that it is impossible to draw a sharp line between things civil and things ecclesiastical; we have seen that in many of the burning questions of the day it is impossible for the Church to surrender her right to teach men and to influence legislation. We have seen, too, that the cessation of any visible connexion between the Church and the State would not lessen the responsibility of the Church in this respect. Now we can see the reason for this fact. It results from the recognition by the Church of that God as her Judge, Lawgiver, Ruler, who is the God, not only of the Church, but of *all*—of the State, the town, the individual, of the race of men and the society of men. Nor is this the exaltation of the Church at the expense of the State. No idea of national life can be higher than that which represents it as an organisation of men under the rule of God, having for its law the very law of God. No conception of social progress can be fuller than that which depicts it as the growth of human society into ever better and purer and nobler things, by the power of God. It may be, and is, convenient and right to limit the work of the State to certain aspects of man's life; it may be, and is, disastrous for the civil governor to attempt to *enforce* virtues and graces that will not come for forcing, and to overstep the bounds that the very nature of society

sets to all civil government. It may be, and is, true that all attempts to enforce religious conformity by civil punishment have done more harm than good to the Church of God and to the State¹. But acknowledgment of these limitations of the sphere of the State, and the assignment to the State of a separate sphere, outside the influence of religion, are very different things. A State may not embrace in her purpose the enforcement of the whole of Christianity, and yet may be Christian; but she cannot remain Christian while the tenor of her legislation is opposed to Christian law. In other words, there may be many things in Christianity that lie outside the province of the State, but there is nothing in the State that lies outside the province of Christianity; the State may limit her sphere, but however limited it be, God is the Judge in it so far as it extends. In the Church, God is the Judge all round; and it is for this reason that she "exalts her mitred front in courts and parliaments," as the bearer of the law of that God whom the Christian Church and all Christian states alike profess to obey. She is not herself the civil ruler—she has no right to bear the sword, or to set up her hierarchy as the only judges and princes of earth. But she bears the law that rulers, no less than other men, are subject to; and she dare not withhold, compromise, or contradict it, in deference to any law of man.

(2) Again, this recognition of God as Judge has another meaning. We have already seen that the

¹ No one, probably, would now deny this; the severest words I have read as to the Inquisition, and the keenest exposure I have seen of the irreligion involved in the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes, are from the pens, respectively, of Lady Burton and Mr. Conan Doyle, both Roman Catholics.

constitution of the heavenly hierarchy throws some light on one great difficulty in connexion with the realisation of God's power on earth—the co-existence of rule and authority among men with the supreme will of God, and of the seemingly mechanical and impersonal forces of nature with the loving power of God. In the “wonderful order” of the assembly of angels, all ranks and dignities are avowedly subject to the supremacy of God, and the heavenly *δυνάμεις*—

“Marshallled might that never cowers,”

are personal and free, and yet subject to the will of God. Now the “Church of the first-born,” like the assembly of the angels, is a great organisation, containing and co-existing with the various powers and differing influences of men, and herself largely shaped, in history, by the results of human power and influence—living among the forces of nature and society, and largely moulded by them in the details of her life. And, like the assembly of the angels, the very essence of her constitution is in her acknowledgment of the supreme will of God. So she is, in her confession of God as her “Judge,” a perpetual lesson to the world. Earth has its societies, its movements, its growth; and Earth is generally content, practically, to find in its own powers reason enough for the endurance of its societies, the force of its movements, the continuance of its growth. But in the midst of Earth is this greatest of all societies, the lines of whose continuous hierarchy are older far than any succession of worldly rulers. She takes her place in the world, as a part of its life, acting on and being acted on by all the movements and forces that go to the making of the life of the world.

She takes all the treasures of which the world is proud, wealth, intellect, character, and draws them into her being. She is a power in the world, to be reckoned up in the most mundane of calculations. And she is and does all this, avowing God's power in it all—the power of God her acknowledged Judge, but in truth the God of all. She proclaims herself the creature of God, the child of God, the servant of God. And in the might of that proclamation she lives and grows and endures. Whatever we think of her claims, she is a reality. Her claim is that she has come right out from God, as a part of the work of the Incarnation, as an abiding portion of the great revelation of God, as an essential thing in the purpose of God disclosed in Christ, and that she thus differs, in her origin and her relation to history, from all other societies, authorities, and powers on earth. But it is a part of her claim, too, that she is intended by God to be in the world, and to share its fortunes and its life—not taken out of it, but preserved from the destroying force of the evil in it. In testimony to these claims she shows herself—exceptional among the things on earth in vitality, adaptability, permanence, and power. The exceptional results must come from some exceptional cause, and none has been suggested so good as that embodied in her own claim—that she lasts because she rests on an exceptional work of God. And so she, having God as her “Judge,” gives a perpetual witness to His being the “God of all,” in which her share in and her separation from the fortunes of earthly things bear equal parts. “I wax and wane,” she says; “I suffer from corruption and am reformed; I sicken, but never unto death; I share the weak-

ness of man, because I am on earth and subject to its laws. So far, you may reckon up my life under these laws. But I endure, and survive all the changes in which nations perish, and outlast the rise and fall of new ideas. Alone among the things that are on earth, I am continuous, and strong, and indestructible. I believe it is because I came out from God, and because the God of all is my Judge—because I am thus what God means all mankind to be, and have found the only basis on which any union of mankind can endure. Can you give a better reason for my endurance? Can you find any other basis of union that will stand the same test?"

(3) But the meaning of her position goes still further. Hitherto we have spoken of the ruling power of God within the Church as the basis of her fixity and endurance, and treated her mutability as the element due to her human and earthly side. We cannot, however, treat this distinction as exhaustive. We have spoken, too, of her claim as resting on her exceptional commission, which belongs, of course, to past history. We cannot, in this case, either, treat this as the whole basis of her claim. Her strength lies in her mutability no less than in her endurance, just as all *life* finds its possibility in the combination of these two motives; all life is essentially the continuance of the living being, but just as essentially the change, growth, adaptation of that being. And so the Church's claim rests, not only on the commission given her in the past, not only on the act of creation, as it were, by which she was given enduring life, but just as fully on the present will of God, modelling and remoulding her life from

day to day. Her "things new" come from the treasury of God no less than her "things old." God is her Ruler "yesterday, to-day, and for ever"—that is to say (giving the words their true meaning), "yesterday and to-day as much as He always was." As we saw in a former chapter, the Church is a living thing; and God her Ruler rules as her life. So she is a lesson of the ever-present power of the living God. As she says to the world, "I am what I am because I am moulded on God's law, and by that same law He desires that you should also be governed;" so she adds, "My life, my adaptability, my growth, the power of taking in new elements continually and blending them with my being that proves my life, are the proof of the present power of the living God, who can be and will be your life too, if you will live by Him."

In the thought thus presented to us of the Church as the society in which the God of all is Judge or Ruler, we may find some consequences of importance to ourselves.

(a) First of all, we may infer her *unity*. We have already considered the scriptural evidences for this doctrine, but now we see that it is necessarily embodied in the very conception of the Church. She is one, because she is, essentially, humanity itself associated and embodied in the only way in which men can find any real and lasting union—that is to say, as God's child and creature, man. To revert to the thought of an earlier chapter, God's city is the city of the *κοσμοπολίτης*; and, so far as she is *among* men, she is among them as Rome was among the people of the Roman world, as the empress-city drew them into her citizenship. For God is her Judge—the one God

of all men ; and the call is to one citizenship under one ruler.

(β) Again, she is one in history. There are two very different modes of thought that practically deny this position. The first is the common Puritan view that finds, if not the birth, at least the renaissance, of the Church at the Reformation, and that practically asks us to believe that there was once a single and pure Church of God, that it perished utterly, and that it has been succeeded, after the Churchless interval of the dark ages, by a multitude of unconnected sects, all of which are Churches. We need not dwell on the utterly chaotic idea of the nature of the Church that underlies this theory. It is sufficient here to point out that it destroys the idea of the Church as a society in which the living God rules ; that it recognises His authority in single lives, but denies it as present in organised Christianity ; that it ignores the thought of the God of all as the ever-present Judge in the city that hath the foundations, the kingdom that shall not be removed, the Church founded once for all on the Rock, against which the gates of hell shall not prevail. But there is a second, and almost more dangerous, form of the same fundamental error. With the fullest belief in the continuity of the Church, with the deepest reverence for her councils and her Fathers, it is possible to forget the unity of her historical life, by forgetting that she is as much alive as she ever was, with the living God within her and the same life now that she had of old. The mediaevalism that distrusts all present effort in Church affairs, that condemns all new thought as ruthlessly as Puritanism denounces the old customs and ritual of the Fathers,

that claims for Fathers and doctors of old the right not only to define the faith but to fix its bounds, rests upon real disbelief in the Church as *now* a living thing. And thereby it loses the great advantage of there being a Church at all; for a Church that said all she had to say many centuries ago and was now silent would be a dead record, not a living voice. While guarding the trusts of the past—the faith once for all delivered to the saints, and the applications and lessons of that faith drawn out for us by saints that are dead—we must fearlessly claim the rights of the Church of the present; we can recite the creeds of the Fathers, but the Creed of to-day may contain elements unknown to them. And one of the worst evils of the religious division of Christendom is this, that it makes the exercise of the living voice of the Church very difficult, and practically limits it to those spheres in which the separated branches may, without seeking a universal decree, legislate for their own children.

(γ) And this brings us to another thought. The God of all is Ruler in His Church, but it does not follow that He must rule it everywhere in exactly the same way. He is "God of all," and yet He has not made all on the same pattern; and differences of race and nationality are as deeply characteristic of humanity as the common unity of human nature that out-comprehends them all. The Old Testament, our Lord in the Gospels, the Apostles, the Church in her undivided days, all agree in recognising national distinctions as a part of God's plan. In these days men have drawn the nations of earth closer together, and men sometimes think that the distinctions of national character will, some time or

other, disappear, and that all will agree to accept a universal civil rule, "the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World." We may, for the sake of argument, admit that this may, some time, happen; we may waive the point that federation implies distinct nationalities to be federated, and that these again imply national differences for which federation must provide. But it must be granted that we are not in those golden days, and that the forestalling of them is no help to their advancement. Even within the same empire, there must be differences of government; and an attempt to enforce the same discipline, organisation, municipal institutions, in England, Australia, and India would certainly end in disaster. The early Church was aware of this, and for many a century her varying liturgies and customs, co-existing with her unity in faith and Apostolic constitution, bore witness to her sense of national life and national character. The position of the Church of England rests on her claim to national independence; her later policy tends to extend the recognition of the same rights to her colonial and missionary branches. And, in this, she is making only the same protest that the Eastern Churches have always made against the attempt to force, not only the Church, but the development of that Church peculiar to one nation, on all the nations of earth. We may see the full meaning of this if we reflect on the real nature of the Church. She is not the embodiment of an ornamental religion added on to life, but of a religion claiming to guide and govern the whole life; she lays hold of all the humanity of a man that she may draw it up to God. She cannot do this if her own life in any nation is alien to that nation—if she imposes on it the fixed forms of another

nationality, and leaves no room for the free play of national life. What may be some time we cannot tell; but so long as the God of all rules men as separate nations, so long His Church must do the same if she is to rule them at all. The existence of schism, the setting up of altar against altar, the dividing of God's army into hostile camps, in no way answers or is analogous to this natural separation of nation from nation. The existence of national Churches is as consistent with the unity of the Church as the existence of separate governments in England and India, or of a different system of judicature in England and Scotland, is consistent with the unity of the British Empire. The existence of separate and mutually contradictory Churches within the same territorial jurisdiction is as destructive of ecclesiastical order and religious progress as an attempt to maintain the Fenian Brotherhood side by side with British rule in Ireland, or an Anarchist Republic side by side with the Queen's Government in England, would be destructive of civil security and national prosperity. The two cases are radically different. The intimate association with national life that causes the same Church to assume different forms in different nations tends to blend the life of that Church more closely with the life of the nation, and so to make national life more Christian. The Christianising of national life, again, tends to draw nations closer together, and so to build up and increase the good will and unity of Christendom. But the existence of hostile sects within the same nation tends to dechristianise the nation; in our own country, it has made it necessary to draw a sharp but altogether illogical line of separation between civil and religious life, and

threatens us with the absolute secularisation of our national existence. Thus one is a uniting, the other a separating, force; one is a help to Christian unity, the other a hindrance; one draws national life nearer to God, the other puts it further from Him. We doubt if many who really care for religion would support ecclesiastical disunion if they fully realised the extent to which it imperils national Christianity and the supremacy of the law of God—the extent to which it keeps the God of all from being owned as the Judge of all.

(δ) I must add one thought more. If the Church be the union of men as subjects of the one God of all, her work must embrace their whole life. She has to deal with this life and the life beyond. She belongs to “the heavens,” but this earth is, as we have seen, not excluded from the heavens. She has to make the God of all, who is her Judge, the Judge of all things as well as all men. She has therefore a share in “social problems”—it is her right to speak, and it is her duty. It may not be always possible for her to suggest specific remedies for social difficulties; the answers can, in general, be found only in a combination of principles belonging to God’s law with the facts of social science. She may not know the facts—they may be as yet but half known to any one. But she has no right to neglect them, and she is bound to speak out, “straight and plain,” God’s law as to the relations of man with man, no less than as to the relations of man with God. And I, for one, have little doubt as to the results of faithful dealing on the Church’s part with social questions. She has no right to try unknown remedies for known evils. She has no right, as a whole, to do what some of her best-intentioned and holiest sons have done, and

to run full tilt against laws of nature and facts of science. But the God of all is her Ruler, and He rules in social matters, so far as the sins and follies of men do not thrust His rule aside. And I believe that the Church of God, prayerfully, earnestly, single-heartedly, facing the social evils and wrongs of the day, would find God's rule with her in her work. To the sick of the world, with the worst of sickness, she brings Christ's message of pardon. And rightly: He gave her that message, His, among men, as the Son of man. But it surely involves a power of successful dealing with the wrongs that stunt men's bodies as well as those that hurt their souls, with the evils that stunt men's bodies and thereby hurt their souls. "But that ye may know that the Son of Man hath power *on earth* to forgive sins, (then saith He to the sick of the palsy,) *Arise and walk.*" If these words mean anything, they mean that the message of Christ *on earth* includes deliverance from material no less than from spiritual evils, and that one is largely the test of the other. I add no more on this point. Abler hands have dealt with the details; those who know the problems best know best the means of treating them. Here, all that is needed is to show that the Church is in her right place in social reform, because the God of all men and all things is, especially, her Judge, her Ruler; because she lives by His life and bears His law among men, and is answerable to Him for using that life and making that law effective, always and everywhere.

CHAPTER VIII.

RIGHTEOUS MEN MADE PERFECT.

“The souls of the righteous are in the hand of God.”

AFTER the assembly of the angels, after the Church of living men, we find another set of members of the City of God—“the spirits of righteous men made perfect.” These are admittedly the holy dead; no other interpretation of the passage has, so far as I know, been ever suggested, and certainly there is no other that is even reasonably likely to be correct.

But the whole manner in which the dead are here spoken of is so peculiar, and the limitations in the allusion to them are so strange, as to call for very close examination. The description of the dead simply as “spirits” is not common in the New Testament, but it is found in other passages, so we need not dwell on it. But the use of the word *δικαίων*, “righteous ones,” as, apparently at first sight, a title distinguishing the dead from the living, the description of these righteous ones as “made perfect,” and the fact, already noticed, that they are not bound together, in the description of them, by any mark of unity, are all striking points that call for some explanation. I think it will be

found, on examination, that they are also suggestive points, bringing us in the way of understanding much more clearly the exact meaning of the writer.

(1) Who are the *δίκαιοι*, or "righteous," here spoken of? In the New Testament the word has an almost technical sense. The "righteous man" answers exactly to the *Tsaddik* or *Yashar* of Jewish theology—the strict observer of the law. So "righteousness," in its narrower sense, is the recognised word for the practical religious ideal of the scribes and Pharisees. So too, in a deeper and fuller significance, Abel, the first of Old Testament saints, and the last of the same line, Zacharias, Elizabeth, and Simeon, are emphatically described as "righteous." In the Talmud the corresponding Hebrew word is used in exactly the same limited signification. From the mere use of the title here we might therefore infer that the reference was to the dead worthies of the Old Testament.

And the context bears out this idea. The thought of the eleventh and twelfth chapters of the Epistle is continuous, and, just as in the eleventh chapter our author takes up and expands the thought suggested by the quotation (in x. 38) of the words, "The just man shall live by faith," so in the twelfth he is largely occupied with the working out of the ideas suggested in the eleventh chapter. This will be more clearly seen in the consideration of the rest of the clause—the word, translated in the A.V. "made perfect," applied to the dead.

(2) This word is striking and peculiar. It cannot mean "made perfect," in the ordinary sense of the word. Both Scripture and reason forbid us to consider the effect of death as a miracle, by which those

who are imperfect pass into sudden perfection. In the Apocalypse, the spirits of the martyrs are at first depicted as "under the altar," in a state of waiting. A dark veil hangs over the state between death and judgment. The light of God comes through it; it is "with Christ," and "far better" than life here; "the souls of the righteous are in the hand of God, and there shall no torment touch them." But the final perfecting of man is far off; it involves not only death, but resurrection. Not by death, but by the power of the Holy Spirit, a power whose time-limits are not assigned, shall we "come to the perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." And indeed we may go further, from the passage before us; for if the spirits of righteous men are the spirits of the Old Testament saints, their "perfection," whatsoever it may mean, is here referred, not to their death, but to what happened long after their death, the work of Christ. To make this and the actual force of the passage plain we must examine the real meaning of the word here translated "made perfect."

It is a derivative word, the perfect participle passive of the verb derived from the Greek word τέλος. Now τέλος means "end," but not "end" in the most generally used sense of that word. In translating "death is the end of life," we would not use τέλος, unless we meant our readers to understand that life was not only brought to a close by, but found its purpose and consummation in, death. In the best Greek, this distinction is always observed, though it is sometimes, but very rarely, disregarded in the Alexandrine Greek of the New Testament; and, in this very Epistle, we have an illustration of the avoidance of τέλος when "termination" is

meant. In the passage, "an oath . . . is the *end* of all strife," our word "end" represents the Greek *πέρας*, not *τέλος*; with the latter word, the passage would have meant "an oath . . . is that in which all strife finds its accomplishment¹."

Now from this word *τέλος* comes the verb *τελειόω*, used here, and several other words that are used in the Epistle. They are all connected in meaning with one another, and with the word *τέλος*. *τελειόω* ("to make perfect") means "to bring a thing to its *τέλος*, or end;" *τέλειος* ("perfect") means "having attained its *τέλος*;" *τελειωτής* ("finisher," xii. 2) means, not the one who puts an end to, but the one who gives a *τέλος* to, anything; *τελείωσις* ("perfection") is the attainment of a *τέλος*.

As we have seen, too, the writer of this Epistle was versed in Greek philosophy, and uses many words in their technical philosophical sense; so that we need not be surprised to find that he uses *τέλος* and its derivatives in the philosophical sense in which *τέλος* means "purpose," or what meta-

¹ I cannot avoid here pointing out three remarkable passages whose meaning is made clearer by the observation of this limitation in the meaning of *τέλος*. In Heb. vi. 8, "whose end is to be burned" (lit. "for burning") means, not "which shall be ended by burning," but "which is only fit for burning." In vii. 3, "end of life" means, not "termination of life," but "accomplishment of life;" the whole clause means, not so much "having a life without beginning or end," as "having a life without finite source or finitely limited purpose." And, lastly, the remarkable reason given for the veil on the face of Moses in 2 Cor. iii. 13, "so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which was being done away," does not seem to me to mean, as it is often interpreted, "so that the children, &c., might not look steadfastly on the *termination*, &c." It is rather, from both words and context, "that, &c., might not look steadfastly to the end (i. e. fulfilment) of that which was being taken away." The thought here is very close to the fundamental idea of the Epistle to the Hebrews.

physicians call "final cause." And he was versed in Jewish technical ecclesiasticism, so we cannot wonder at his combining the philosophic sense of these words, in some cases, with special Jewish meanings. By this means, he has given a very wide range of meaning to the verb *τελειόω*, and we have to observe the context closely to find its exact force in different cases. Thus, it sometimes means (in the passive) "to grow to manhood," sometimes (as applied to our Lord) "to be consecrated as a priest," sometimes "to be brought to its final form¹." But under all these shades of meaning is the common thought of "finding the *τέλος*"—end, purpose, final cause.

Now the "righteous" spoken of here are, as we have seen, the Old Testament worthies. From the thought that, even in the Old Testament itself, these are said to "live by faith," our author goes on to consider what faith is; and he finds that it always involves looking forward to something "hoped for" and "not seen." This then is the meaning of the lives of Abel and his successors; they looked out beyond their lives to something they had not yet obtained. This something was the *τέλος*—the end, object, purpose, of their faith. He makes it clear, too, what this unseen object was. They confessed themselves "pilgrims and strangers." Abraham was a wanderer in a land not yet his own—he looked forward to the fulfilment of the promise of its possession. His descendants obtained it, but still they looked onward. They sought "the city that hath the foundations, whose builder and maker is God." So the heroes of Israel from the beginning to the very days of the Maccabees lived and died by

¹ See Bishop Westcott's note on *τελείωσις* in his "Commentary on the Epistle to the Hebrews."

faith, ever looking forward to a τέλος, or end, not vouchsafed to them. For they "did not receive the promise, God having provided some better thing concerning us (i. e. for them, but in which we are involved) that they without us should not be made perfect" (τελειωθῶσι—obtain their τέλος). Very plainly, what is here meant is that their faith found its "end" in Christianity; very plainly, this "end" is what they looked for, "the city that hath the foundations," the City of God.

The thought thus worked out is further developed. We and they are *together*; we are "compassed about" by them, for we and they have the same τέλος, and the words just referred to imply that they have actually now found that end and purpose of their life. And we, like them, must "look to Jesus, the leader and the completer (τελειωτήν—the one who gives the τέλος) of the faith"—not "the faith," as the words are used when we read of "the faith once for all delivered to the saints," but "the faith" just spoken of—their faith, by which they looked to this very τέλος. Thus our author prepares the way for the very passage we are considering; and, when he describes "the City of God," he remembers and expects his readers to remember that it is the city he has already spoken of, to which the Old Testament saints looked forward. He does not say that they looked for Christ definitely, but only that they looked for the τέλος that was only to be found in Christ. And, when he speaks of the City of God, he remembers that they, having looked for it, have now found it. So they are τετελειωμένοι—those who have been brought to their τέλος, end, object: not the end or purpose of their being, but the object and end of the faith that was the heart and core of their life.

To this interpretation there is one objection, but it is a trifling one, and is completely overborne by the very evident connexion of thought running through the whole passage. We should naturally expect an article before *δικαίων*, but there is none. But the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews is very peculiar in his use of articles. He often uses them where we should hardly expect to find them; thus, in this very passage, he prefixes one to the name of Abel. On the other hand, he largely omits them where they might reasonably be expected: and it so happens that the whole passage which forms the text of this book is a remarkable instance of this characteristic. Except the article before the name of Abel, there is not a single article in it from beginning to end. The probable reason is to be sought in the oratorical speed and force of the passage; but the result is so marked a peculiarity of style as to have led to the insertion, by copyists, of two articles in the very next verse. The objection from the absence of one before *δικαίων* can therefore hardly be pressed.

The thought of the clause is then this. The dead saints of the Old Testament are now our fellow-citizens in the Church of God, which is the City of God; this is the end they looked for, and this end they have attained. Not by their lives on earth, but by the present fulfilment of the object of those lives now, they are one with us—not merely by their share in the evolution of Christianity, but by their fellow-membership with us in the present "Communion of Saints." This communion as a whole is implied, for most surely "the dead in Christ" are not deprived of that which they found on earth, if those who died before Christ have been enabled to find it

after death. But the immediate purpose of the writer is to show, and his actual words do only show, that Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and their fellow-Jews are *now* members of the Christian Church.

(3) But here we are met by a curious fact, to which passing attention has already been called. The holy dead are spoken of in a manner quite unlike either the angels or the living members of the Church. The angels form an "assembly," the living a Church, but the dead are mentioned without any word to mark them as embodied in any other unity than that of the City of God, in which they are included with the living and the holy angels. Again, they are separated from the latter by the words, "and to the God of all as Judge," as though the writer did not desire to include them, in the same sense as the living, as organised under the acknowledged government of God. For this a reason may be assigned. Whatsoever may be the details of the state of the happy dead, we are quite sure that it is an *incomplete* state, and in one sense—as not mere spirits, but men, with body, soul, and spirit—the living are nearer to what God meant man to be than are those who rest from their labours between death and judgment. We know little of the "intermediate state"; the sacred writers speak of it with caution, touching only its borders, and then with reverent reticence.

"Where wert thou, brother, those four days?"

There lives no record of reply,
Which, telling what it is to die,
Had surely added praise to praise.

.

Behold a man raised up by Christ!
The rest remaineth unreveal'd;
He told it not; or something seal'd
The lips of that Evangelist."

We know a little, but a very little. We know that it is a conscious state, in which the dead could hear the preaching of the dead Christ in the "harrowing of hell." We know that it is a state of expectant waiting, as the souls waited beneath the altar in the vision of St. John the Divine. We know that it is rest, and life with Christ; and we know, from the words before us, that it may bring larger knowledge than life brings, and the fulfilment of hopes that were only hopes on earth. But we do not know whether it be a "social" state or not: we do not know how far it is a state of work or not. It is as much overshadowed by the coming life of heaven as the life of the babe in the womb is overshadowed by its coming life in the world. We do not know that it may not be as absolutely a preparation for that renewed life as (to use St. Paul's simile) the germination of the seed in the underworld of earth is a preparation for its life above the soil. It is at least a striking fact that St. Paul, in his prayer for his dead friend, confines himself absolutely to a petition for mercy for him in the day that begins the resurrection life. This reticence is worthy of imitation; it gives us, at any rate, no pretext for the invocation of the happy dead. In some wonderful way, the seed sown here—the whole life of the man, is burgeoning out into the "spiritual body" of the new life; we hardly know more than this, that the blessed dead *are* happy, conscious, with Christ, growing, waiting, necessarily incomplete, and as yet imperfect.

But the view thus given to us of the state of the holy dead, in relation to the Church of God, is fertile in suggestions, in other directions; and it throws light, in several ways, on the constitution of the Church.

(a) First of all, it enables us to understand more clearly the *evolution* of that Church. We may perhaps say that "evolution" is now accepted, both widely and wisely, as a law that shows itself powerful in all departments of science: in the dynamic laws of the universe, in all the manifestations of life, in human thought and morality, even in religion itself, we find it in operation. The question between Theist and Atheist is no longer, in any sphere, whether there be evolution or not, but a widely different one. The Theist claims to find under evolution evidences of a design towards which evolution is a means: he believes (to borrow Mr. Drummond's terms) that *evolution* is only the outward manifestation of an *involution*, by which life, or force in some shape, moves towards an end as well as from a germ. We cannot deny, as we have already seen, an evolutionary movement in the Old Testament. The author of the Epistle to the Hebrews does not deny it: it is plainly to be discerned in the account he gives of Judaism; it is involved in his definition of faith and his description of its effects in the lives of the Jewish worthies. But it is the evolution of what was present, in germ, from the beginning. The Church of God, as God's City and God's Kingdom, unfolded herself in history, because she was present in God's purpose all through history. We need not believe that the faith of the Old Testament elders consciously looked for Christ or His Church; but, just as it ever looked out beyond priest and king and sacrifice, beyond law and prophet, seeking in unsatisfied longing for an ever-growing ideal priest, king, prophet, sacrifice, and law, so it looked beyond the holy city and the holy nation to a better

kingdom and a better city. But, if they did not know what was to come, God knew : and by these ways He led them and the world on to Christ. The world endured, and God's purpose unfolded itself, its way prepared before it : and, in the world beyond the grave, they too endured. The "evolution," begun in them here, went on in them hereafter ; and so they "attained their end," even Christ, and were made members in the City of God. For, as we have seen, it is as having attained that end that they are enrolled as citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem.

(β) But this, again, suggests something further. If a preparation, extending over many ages, was necessary for the world before it was ripe for the coming of Christ and the beginning of a universal Church, this preparation was no less necessary for the individuals who lived in each successive period of that world's history. If Abraham and Isaac and Jacob were not fitted, while on earth, to receive this great revelation, neither were they fitted for it just after death—unless we evacuate life of all its meaning as a time of learning by giving to the moment of death the force of many centuries of life, as a teacher. So that if, in the course of time, the great membership in the heavenly city came to them, they must have completed their preparation for it. Be it noted, there is no shadow of a hint that they attained this τέλος apart from the historic manifestation of Christ. Just as St. Peter tells us that Christ, who in life brought the news of the kingdom to the living, in His death brought it to the dead, that the judgment of their state on earth might not be taken as the complete judgment of their whole existence, so too here. These died, not having received the promise ; Christ came, and they

received it. So, between death and judgment, they attained to what they had not on earth; they lived and grew and moved on, taught by God even as the world was taught, till the fullness of time came and God's purpose was revealed. We know nothing as to *how* God taught them, but we cannot avoid the inference that He did teach them, or the thought that gives a fuller meaning to this inference, that the time between death and judgment is a part of the teaching-time of God—a time of attainment. *They* at least attained their τέλος there; I do not know any reason for saying that the advent of our Lord made all possibility of attainment vanish from the unseen world.

(γ) But this, if it be so, may avail to cleanse many scales from our eyes. When we speak of the Church as an essential part of Christianity, we are generally met by the question as to what we think of those outside the Church. In a parallel case (the assertion of the Athanasian Creed that belief in the Trinity and Incarnation are necessary to salvation) Charles Kingsley met a parallel objection by appealing to "the old Catholic belief in the intermediate state." I do believe (he said in effect) that salvation requires these beliefs as an essential: I do not believe that all who do not now believe in them are lost. There is a world beyond, and they may learn there much of God's truth that is hidden from them here. So, too, as regards membership of the Church. We have no ground for saying that there is no door into God's Church on the other side of death; those who entered her portals, having on this side of the grave known her only by faith, must have found such a door. If, as we have already seen, her sphere is not limited to earth, but stretches out to all "the

heavens" of God, we can set no bounds within those heavens as to where her open door may be found by any individual spirit, and he may attain the τέλος to which, if not his faith, at least the constitution of the nature given him by God, ever pointed, the membership of the one society for which man was made, the fulfilment of his destiny as man by his receiving a place in "the perfect man, which is the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ."

CHAPTER IX.

THE MEDIATOR OF THE NEW COVENANT.

"Behold, I make all things new."

HERE, as in almost every clause of this wonderful description, the Greek is striking and peculiar. The order of the words marks the precise meaning as "and to a mediator of a new covenant, even Jesus," so that the unity of the city is traced to the presence therein of a "covenant" and its mediator, and the contents of that city lead up to and find their final summary in the person of our Lord. The words "mediator" again, and "covenant," are both technical, and link the thought of the clause to arguments that have gone before it in the Epistle; and the adjective *νέος*, which in the Greek represents our word "new," is also remarkable. It is used nowhere else in the Epistle, and nowhere in the New Testament in a similar connexion.

(1) The thought of "mediation" is fundamental in the Epistle; in fact, its whole argument rests on the comparison of the mediation by which God gave the law of the Jews and that by which He gave the Gospel. The word "mediator" is not used until, in the eighth chapter, it is applied to Christ. but the idea involved in it is common

through the whole Epistle, and the meaning of the title, when given to our Lord, is made plain by the preceding account of His office as mediator. Practically, the argument is as follows. God has never spoken absolutely directly to man. He gave the Jewish law through the mediation of angels, on the one hand, and of Moses on the other; the Jew worshipped through the mediation of the priest, and through the same mediation God's blessings came to him. In both cases, the nature of God's gift was partly determined by the nature of the mediator. The law was imperfect in its revelation of God, and the prophets gave God's word "in many fragments and in many manners," and the worship remained shadowy, and the pardon incomplete, because of the imperfections of their mediators. But, in the revelation of Christianity, God spoke through a Son, gave the law through one who was Lord of "the house," consecrated that Son as Priest, that voice and law and worship might be better and fuller and nearer to God, because their mediation was better and nearer. In all the former things, the mediator himself belonged to the shadow-world, the world of "patterns"; in Christianity He is God's own Son and the perfect Man; the true mediator, not only because in Him God and man meet in one, but because He brings the real life of God, in Himself, into this world of human life and exalts the world of human life into the real world of God. So the citizens of the heavenly Jerusalem gather round the "mediator"—the head of their assembly and the source of their life, the one in whom they live and move and are.

(2) But the precise force of this title of "mediator" comes out more strongly when we come to

the idea of a "covenant." This is also fundamental in the Epistle, though the translation of the word *διαθήκη* as "Testament" in many passages has obscured the meaning. There seems no reasonable ground for doubting that it should always be translated "covenant." It is never used, in either the LXX or Classical Greek, in the sense of "Testament," and the introduction of the latter word in this Epistle plays havoc with the argument, and reduces it, in many places, to a rather clumsy metaphor.

The "berith," or covenant, of the Hebrews was a solemn and final agreement. It was regarded as under Divine sanction and protection, and that it bore this character among neighbouring nations also is evident from the Phœnician worship of Baal as "Baal-Berith"—"the Lord of the covenant." But the most remarkable peculiarity of the *Berith* is the figure under which its immutability is expressed. It was entered on under the sanction of a solemn sacrifice. It is possible that this, at first, was no more than a joint feast expressive of mutual good-will; but when we first find the "covenant" in history, the sacrifice had acquired a very striking significance. It was not propitiatory, and in its meaning resembled no other sacrifice that we know of. By some ritual act, either by passing between the divided body of the victim or by eating of its flesh, each covenanting party solemnly identified himself with the sacrifice. It was dead, and so, as far as that covenant was concerned, was he. His promise had passed out of his power, and was as the word of a dead man, unchanging. This seems to have been the meaning of the covenant-offering, and this it was which distinguished the

promise of a covenant from all other vows and promises whatsoever. It was "valid in the case of the dead;" "the death of him who made the covenant was implied," "it had no force while he that made it lived." So far as it was concerned, he was a dead man, and kept his life only on the condition of being so far dead. That this, and not propitiation, was the fundamental idea of this sacrifice, is plain from the story of God's covenant with Abraham, in which the Lord confirms His promise by the vision of a fire, representing His glory, passing between the severed bodies of the victims. Thus the Lord Himself appears as adopting the ritual by which the covenant-maker identified himself with his sacrifice, for the confirmation of His promise to Abraham. Similarly, the bloodshedding of circumcision was taken as the ritual expression of the death of him who was circumcised, that he might thus be admitted into the Lord's covenant.

Now just as in the shadow-sanctuary and shadow-sacrifices of the law our author finds the foreshadowing of the Christian life and the sacrifice of Christ, just as in the holy city of the Jews he finds the foreshadowing of the City of God, so in the covenant-sacrifice, by which the offerer himself suffered a ritual death, he finds the foreshadowing of the death of Christ and connects the latter with a new covenant between God and man. And in this covenant Christ is the "mediator," representing God to man and man to God; just as He is the sacrifice that, on the part of God and man, confirms the covenant. We shall soon see what this means, more accurately; at present, it is enough to point out the force of the word "covenant" and of the

name "mediator" applied in relation thereto to our Saviour.

(3) Again, this covenant is said to be "new." The full force of this word is not evident to an English reader, as already, in several places in the Epistle, he has read of a "new covenant," or "New Testament," and is otherwise familiar with the phrase. But the meaning of the word in the passage before us is quite different from that used in these other places. There are two different words used in the New Testament, both translated "new"—*καινός* and *νέος*. In Classical Greek they differ very slightly in meaning, though the former is generally used of things without life, and the latter, in the sense of "young," of persons or animals. But in the Alexandrine Greek of the New Testament there is a distinction in their use. Both are occasionally employed side by side in the same passage in such a manner as to bring out the full force of this distinction. Thus, when our Lord speaks of "putting new wine into new bottles," he uses both words; the wine is *νέος*, for the bottles He uses the word *καινός*. Again, in the "new heavens and new earth," and in "the new covenant" wherever elsewhere spoken of, the adjective is *καινός*. So *νέος* marks newness in the sense of recent origin; *καινός* marks the strength, and soundness, and vigour of youth. In the passage before us the "new covenant" is called a "*novel* covenant"—*νέα διαθήκη*—a covenant now for the first time existing. This is very remarkable. In what sense is the Christian covenant "*novel*"?

Let us look on a little further for an explanation. A couple of verses lower, the establishment of the kingdom of God is spoken of in terms that forbid

us to think of it as novel. It is "a kingdom that cannot be shaken," that has therefore remained in the earthquake-shaking of heaven and earth. It is not then "new," but the lasting work of God, remaining after all the shadow-sanctuary and shadow-kingdom of Israel had been shaken to pieces.

Nor is this mode of thought confined to our Epistle. In the Epistle to the Galatians, St. Paul lays special stress on the aspect of Christianity as in truth the old religion. It is the older covenant, confirmed by God's promise to Abraham, unannulled by the "law, which was four hundred and thirty years after;" the old covenant, resting on the unchanging promise of God.

So we cannot take the words here as meaning that the covenant in Christ was really "a new thing." It is old—far older than Abraham. It forms, as our author is careful to show, the very basis of Jewish history and Jewish religion; it was waited for, hoped for, looked forward to, prepared for. It is *new*—*καινή*—coming fresh with the strength of youth into the world, unlike the old things that were ready to vanish away. But it is not in itself *novel*, *νέα*. It seems to be so called for a special purpose, in a special sense. (a) As only now known—now for the first time revealed in Christ. (β) As marking by its revelation the beginning of a new order. For the first readers of the Epistle it was necessary to emphasise the death of Judaism, and to them the new covenant, old though it was, was novel. (γ) Perhaps the word may have been suggested by the mention just made of the righteous men of the Old Testament. To them, in particular, in their life beyond the earth, the manifestation of Christ—though the goal of their hopes—was a new thing;

not in their old faith, but in its new fulfilment, we and they are one in the City of God.

Let us now see what these words, whose exact meaning I have attempted to define, tell us of the City of God.

(1) They bring it before us as the city of the covenant. As we saw in the first chapter, the earthly holy city, Jerusalem, owed its sanctity to three great possessions; and holiest among these was "the Ark of the covenant," containing the written law, the covenant itself. With this law both the other κτήματα were indissolubly united; the throne of David fell with the loss of the Ark, and the Temple, where in our Lord's days the priests ministered before the empty Holy of Holies, had lost its chief claim to special sanctity. To this day, the religious affection and veneration of the Jew centre in the "Torah," the holy law, whose precepts he binds on his hands and his forehead and fastens to his door, before which he rises in reverence in his synagogue worship, whose holiest words are the first to greet the new-born babe and are whispered last in the ears of the dying. The Jews were the people of the covenant. So, argues our writer, the heavenly city has its covenant too. It is a law, and more than a law, for it is law and life. Our consciences have been cleansed and our bodies washed with pure water, and the life of God, in the midst of her, is the covenant of the City of God. It is written on the heart and mind—the desire for good, the acceptance of the law of good, the power to do good. It is accepted in baptism, as life under the law of God; it is continued in Holy Communion, as life by the power of God. So the covenant of God with His Church ends in the one thing for which

man was made, and Christ came, and the Church was founded—godliness of life. And as he who lived in Israel, but obeyed not the law, cut himself off from the inner life of the true Israel of God, so he who is in the outward unity of the Church, but lives not as her Master lived, by His law and by His life, is cutting himself off from that Church's true life. He is "least in the kingdom of heaven;" he is in the Church, but not of the Church. Thus the Church, as the city of the covenant, is the union of God with men, and of men with one another, for godliness of life, in heart and voice and deed. Only, we must remember that it is no more, for each one of us, a mere means towards an individual sanctity than it is a mere means of saving our souls. It is like Jerusalem, but it is, as we saw in the first chapter, also like Rome—the city of conquest, reaching out and gathering in the nations, and uniting those gathered in. It is like Rome, but it is also the city of the Stoics' dream—the city of the *κοσμοπολίτης*, the unity of man in God. So the covenant of God with that Church is God's law and life given to His Church for all men; and her object, and ours if we be her true sons, cannot be attained by any godliness save the godliness of *mankind*.

(2) And this covenant has its "mediator." The thought of this "mediation" is very closely worked out in the ninth chapter of this Epistle. Speaking generally, the argument is as follows:—Taking his stand on the idea of the covenant-sacrifice as representing the death of the covenant-maker—the cessation of the life lived apart from the covenant—our author sees in this a picture of the work of Christ. He too offered Himself

in sacrifice; He too died, not merely symbolically, but really. So He died out of the old life—that life which the law vainly tried to rule. But He died to live again, with a new life—a life of power. He then comes to us, having fulfilled the condition of death, and brings us Himself; in Him we die to the life that is apart from Him, and by Him we live with His new life. So in Him we die and live again, as being one with Him; and through Him come the law and the life of God. His sacrifice “purges the conscience;” the heart and life of His servants are cleansed, so that they die to the godless life; His life is “unto salvation,” bringing the power of living the life of God. So far as “the blood is the life,” His blood that was shed flows again in His veins; and, if we are partakers of His death, we are partakers also of His risen life. Thus in the Eucharist we receive the separate bread and wine—the Body and Blood sundered in death; but they are one again in the receiving, because we are partakers, not of a dead Christ, but of a Christ that “liveth and was dead.” He *was* the mediator in His death, the sacrifice of God and the sacrifice of man, where God and man met in the death which is the portal of all new life. He *is* the mediator in His life, for He is the power and strength that raises the new covenant above the old—the strength to serve God.

(3) And this covenant, thus given in Christ, is final and complete. For, though new in its manifestation, it is not a new thing. As we saw before, angels and men were made in Christ, and made to serve God, and Christ’s is the strength by which alone they can serve Him. Between man and God’s purpose for him comes sin—*ἁρμία*, which

is the lawlessness that cannot obey,—*ἀδικία*, which is the departure from the honest and true heart and life God intended for man,—*ἁμαρτία*, deepest word of all, the missing of the purpose of God for man. Between man, thus burdened with sin, and the attainment of this purpose, stands death; for only through death can man break loose from the bonds of this sinfulness, only “by fire” can its stains be taken away. But what sin mars, and death cuts off from man, is no new design, but the fulfilment of the purpose of his being. And the life and death of Christ are in part a special means of meeting the results of sin and death; but these are met that man, freed from them, may be in Christ what God always intended him to be. So the new covenant is in truth the oldest of all; it is *God's original idea*. For each one of us, it is his restoration to the place and work and joy that God made him for in Christ, by his death through Christ to sin, and his life through Christ to godliness.

(4) And this covenant essentially includes the idea of the Church. For the very fact that man was made at first in Christ marks him as made in unity. His social affections, and their connexion with all that is best in him, mark him as intended by God to live in unity with his fellows; and all the deepest cravings of his nature mark him as intended to live in unity with God. And, again, these unities are parts of a deeper unity. The holy angels have their *πανάγυρις*, and man and they are one as made in Christ. All life, as science tells us more and more every day, is one; and Christianity tells us that it has its source and unity in the oneness of God. A religion, therefore, that dealt with man as an individual only would run counter to all the

indications that we have of God's intentions for man. It is hardly possible to classify any act of any man's as purely self-regarding; so a covenant that includes a moral code, or a moral power, must treat man as essentially social, and his social nature cannot stop short of the unity of mankind. But this is just what the Church of God is, so far as it relates to man—*humanity as God's creature, in God's life*. This is her ultimate Catholicity; and this thought underlies the names by which she is known in the New Testament. She is "the Bride, the Lamb's wife," because she is His perfectly, inseparable from Him. She is the body of Christ, because He is, as it were, incomplete without her. She is His fullness, because His love and His desires seek to her, and ever sought to her, for satisfaction. She is the City of God, because she expresses perfectly, in her ideal form, the unity of mankind and of all spirits in God.

(5) Lastly, this covenant finds its centre in the living Christ. "We are come . . . unto Jesus." In some of Wedgwood's vases, a beautiful law of construction has been followed. The outline of the vessel is perfect in form, and base and top are covered with exquisite workmanship. But the lines of the vase itself, and of all the ornaments, are so designed that the eye cannot rest in them; every line carries the sight beyond itself, leading it to the group or figure that occupies the middle part of the vessel. Everything is made in relation to that figure and leads to it. So, too, with the Church of God. A false ecclesiasticism may end in Church-worship; the true doctrine of the Church leads ever to Christ. The body—and she *is* His body—is dead without Him, for He is the life; the Bride—and she is His Bride—is a widow without Him, for

He is her Lord ; the city, without the King of the city, is not the city of the Great King. And if we love to dwell on the thought of our membership in the Church, and to exalt her among the nations, it is because her one purpose is to bring us and all men closer to Him, and to exalt His kingdom among men. We "pray for the peace of Jerusalem," but the Lord is her peace; we live in, and defend, and build up our city, but because she is the City of the living God.

Would to God she were one ! The making of her visible unity is not easy. We cannot deny her faith that we may win her more members ; that would be to tear down the walls of the city, and invite men to inhabit a desert with us. We cannot, because we desire to be one, assent to what we do not believe, or condemn God's laws that we may receive instead commandments of men. We cannot unmake history in a moment, or blot out at once the mistakes of centuries. But, if we realise how deeply seated is the idea of "One Catholic and Apostolic Church" in our Christianity, we cannot but work and pray for unity. We know that the war of sects is not unity; we see sectarianism charged with a terrible indictment, and do not see how sectarianism can be acquitted.

It endangers Christianity itself by separating men in their religious life. For Christianity is nothing if it be not practical, a working force in daily life, moulding the daily relations of man with man. But, under the influence of sectarian separation, it is fast becoming impossible to allow religious motives to rule in the business of man with man. We arrange our everyday affairs with one another on the basis of our agreements, and

sectarianism makes it hard to reckon our religion among these.

It endangers missionary work. We cannot say that the heathen is very unwise who asks us to agree as to our own religion before we ask him to accept it, or who is honestly unable to receive Christianity because he does not know what Christianity to receive. And others besides Bishop Selwyn's Maori friend come to the parting of the ways, where sects divide. "He sat there," said the Bishop, "till he died."

It endangers religion at home. Unbelief is helped by it; division breeds division, and from the edges of the sects there is a continual leakage into unbelief. The agnostic has one more argument, at least, for his plea that we cannot know anything about religion, in the continual war of the sects.

It is rapidly making *national* religion impossible. It has provoked quarrels between the Church and the State; it has forced on a separation between the civil and the religious ideas of marriage; it has made the whole education question intensely difficult. To many, the only remedy seems to be Disestablishment; the religious profession of the nation is so sickly, from division, that they can see no suitable issue but death. So, like the divorce laws of its breeding, it puts asunder those whom God joined together, the Church and the nation.

It substitutes an unpractical "religious sentiment" for religious law. The "Nonconformist conscience" means well; but it is not a conscience. It has neither unity nor any visible means of making that unity, if it could be attained, known. Unformed, irresponsible, ever-shifting, it gives crude judgments

on questions imperfectly understood. It means well ; but the need for it arises from the loss of the organised living voice of the Christian Church, as *one*.

It turns our weapons against one another instead of against the enemy. There is much for the Christian Church to do for the bodies and souls of men ; much that she has always tried to do, and much that new conditions of life make it desirable that she should do. Unbelief is a powerful enemy ; so, in another way, are vice and ignorance and evil conditions of life. But we fight with divided forces, and so at a great disadvantage. "We are," say the sects, "different regiments in the same army." But are we? Regiments in the same army are under one commander. The sects are not. Regiments in the same army unite as an army, for common work under a common law. The sects do not. Regiments in the same army are not organised each at its own will for its own purposes. The sects are. Regiments in the same army do not fire on one another. The sects do.

What we pray for, what we work for, is a united Church ; in God's good time, but helped on by faithfulness to the Church as she is, and earnest effort for her growing unity. Think what such a Church would be. She would be God's visible city and kingdom. She would substitute for vague sentiment an acknowledged religious law. She would bear witness to the only God and the one Christ among the heathen, and draw together all Christian effort at home against the world, the flesh, and the devil. She would bring religion into daily life, and mould the counsels of nations by the law of God. She would bring the truce of God into many of the

quarrels of men, and the peace of God to warring nations. And, because she was one, she would be a uniting force everywhere. As men worshipped together, they would learn of a religion with wider aims than the salvation of each individual soul; as they joined with one another in the service of God they would learn what they had gained in coming to Sion, "Mount and City of God, the Heavenly Jerusalem." We should see the visible side of that "wonderful order" which is, in heaven, the assembly of the angels—even "the Church of the first-born who are enrolled in the heavens." One on earth, in the city whose foundations are in heaven, we should realise more fully the work of God which goes on to eternity, and in which the holy dead have a share; we should be one in the new covenant, one in the love and life of the Lord of that covenant, one with one another, and one with God. It cannot be the work of a day or a year; we can only sow, and wait God's time for harvest. But the realisation of the vision of the holy city, let down from God out of heaven, upon earth, is worth praying for and worth working for.

"Oh, pray for the peace of Jerusalem;
They shall prosper that love thee.
Peace be within thy walls,
And plenteousness within thy palaces.
For my brethren and companions' sakes
I will wish thee prosperity.
Yea, because of the House of the Lord our God
I will seek to do thee good."

שאלו שלום ירושלם:

APPENDIX.

A NOTE ON MR. BENJAMIN KIDD'S "SOCIAL EVOLUTION."

SINCE this book was placed in the hands of the printers I have carefully read Mr. Benjamin Kidd's most valuable and important work—a work for which both theologians and sociologists owe him gratitude. As, however, his conclusions on certain points are diametrically opposed to those which are advocated in this book, I think it may not be out of place to offer a few comments on the conclusions and the general principles on which they are based.

It is not easy to sum up in a few lines the contents of a large and thoughtful book, but the following seems to me to be a fair summary of the one under consideration. Mr. Kidd believes (1) that all social progress is intimately connected with morality; the victory lies, not with the intellectually strong, but with the moral, the self-denying, the courageous: with those nations, in fact, that have learned to subordinate individual interest to that of others. (2) But this morality, though so much depends on it, has no rational sanction. All human progress depends on *sacrifice*, made by the existing generation for the sake of generations to come; and man has no natural tendency or desire to make this sacrifice. We do not spare the use of an ounce of coal, in order that the day of its disappearance

from the earth and the consequent loss to those who will come after us may be delayed. For this reason all systems of morality, like Utilitarianism, that rest on reason are faulty, and, in reality, "deeply immoral." (3) The true root of morality is to be found in religion, which is always on the side of altruism. Historically, morality has always had a religious basis; and the history of human progress is the history of the contest of man with his own reason. Reason urges him to that expanded selfishness which is care for only the present generation; religion urges him to actions, self-denials, and sacrifices, that inflict loss on the present generation, but are good in the long run for the race or the nation. (4) Thus religion is at the basis of all progress; the most religious nations are foremost in the race of life: with the decay of its belief in its religion a nation lapses into what we may call "present-generation selfishness," and so falls. (5) Though he does not say so in so many words, yet Mr. Kidd's argument seems to infer his belief in a natural and necessary adolescence, maturity, and decay in the life of nations. In the power of its altruism it advances; by this power it prevails. By-and-bye reason comes into conflict with its religious beliefs, and with them go its altruism and its power of handing on in its full strength that life of generations to come, on whose persistence and development the progress of the nation depends. This position Mr. Kidd constantly illustrates by comparisons between the life of a nation and that of an organism. (6) Just as the history of all social evolution is the history of religion, so the history of Western civilisation is the history of Christianity. The social ideas brought into the world by Christianity

were absolutely new; and they upset all old civilisations, and introduced one of an entirely different kind. To Mr. Kidd, ancient Rome was simply a conquering nation, maintaining herself by pure strength and the subjection of weaker nations; and the fundamental idea of her polity was thus absolutely opposed to that of Christianity. So, too, Greek life and thought convey to him no hint of any sort of polity resembling the Christian. (7) The Christian ethical and social ideas first took shape in the establishment of a great religious kingdom, the Mediæval Church, and of this Church he gives an eloquent and appreciative account. But these ideas have had their highest form among those nations only which accepted the Reformation, since the weakening of men's hold on the Church strengthened and deepened their sense of responsibility and so gave their religion more strength.

Thus Mr. Kidd has arrived at the very curious conclusion that religion is irrational, and even contrary to reason, and that it is nevertheless necessary to progress. Since that which is contrary to reason cannot be true, it would seem to follow that religion is untrue but necessary, if we are to help our descendants to prosper; but since it is only religion that makes us wish to give this help to those who, our reason tells us, can give us no help in return, it is hard to see why we should bind ourselves within the bounds of an irrational system, only because it supplies the means of satisfying a desire that it has itself engendered.

And we may set beside this another strange result of Mr. Kidd's argument. If religion be the great social force in the world, and unecclesiastical Christianity be the best form of religion, it is at least

strange that the form of Christianity which is most socially efficacious should be that which is based most on individualism and is therefore least social in form. Such a conclusion is quite paradoxical enough to make us suspect some flaw in the reasoning by which it was reached.

To me, as the preceding chapters will have shown, it seems plain that the Christianity which is to bring social progress must be social Christianity; and it seems just as plain that the development of this Christianity is not a chapter apart from all that went before it. I cannot see how anyone, reading Roman history with an open mind, can fail to perceive how far from the truth Mr. Kidd's summary of that history is, or to recognise that, through the idea of the Roman *civitas*, God helped the world nearer to the brotherhood to be revealed in Christ. I cannot see how anyone, with the New Testament and Greek (or Græco-Phœnician) thought before him, can fail to own that God prepared men's minds through the workings of Stoicism for the idea of the City of God. I cannot see how anyone, who has once realised how closely all European progress is dependent on Christianity, can fail to observe that all which gives a national and a cosmopolitan tendency to that progress is the result, not of individualism, but of the remnants, at least, of belief in the Church of God. If it be true that the Teutonic nations have advanced most in social development, it is also true that the one nation which has made its power of growth and the predominant influence most felt is England. And whatever the Reformation may have done elsewhere, it left England with a definite religious organisation—with a single Church closely

interwoven with her national life—with, in fact, a clearly-defined and practically expressed idea of religion as social, not merely individual. It must not be forgotten that the Reformation had another meaning besides that ascribed to it by Mr. Kidd, and unfortunately only too true in many cases; and it is at least possible that the correction of certain abuses and the removal of certain scandals, the cutting off of certain corruptions of doctrine and (I say it with fear and trembling) the rendering of certain points of belief more reasonable, may have had something to say to the effect of the Reformation on social evolution.

But this failure to perceive the real meaning and effect of the Reformation is not the only flaw in Mr. Kidd's argument. At almost every stage, it seems to me, he passes over points that, if noticed, would have considerably modified his opinions.

(1) I admit most fully that human progress has always been associated with religion; that morality, when dissociated from religion, is only too apt to go astray; and that all attempts to trace the sanctions of morality to the intellect alone leave the intellect itself unsatisfied. I go further, and admit that I can see no way out of either of two positions—that religion and morality alike had better be swept aside as illusions, or that belief in God and His laws is belief in what is *true*, and is therefore closely bound up with the progress of the race. Just as, in philosophy, one rests ultimately on the belief that what is reasonable and orderly must be the *real* in existence; so too one can hardly avoid holding that a general line of thought and action which is absolutely essential to the development of humanity, must have its roots in the real facts as to the origin

and destiny of humanity. If I thought otherwise, I should throw up the sponge at once, and let lying fate do as she would with posterity.

But I fail to see that this element of religion is irrational, or contrary to reason, unless by "reason" Mr. Kidd means something different from what I mean. Theism and belief in immortality can construct strong defences of a purely rational kind; and, though undoubtedly neither originated in a rational process, yet it by no means follows that either must be in conflict with reason. For the matter of that, the social conflict between religion and reason is resolved by Mr. Kidd into a battle between man's supernatural sanctions for moral action on the one hand, and his desire for his own good on the other: and we know well that men no more learned to desire their own happiness on grounds of reason than they so learned to believe in God. I did not reason myself into belief in God, but, having got the belief, I reasoned for its support; and I humbly submit that it is going a great deal too far to say that the basis of theism is contrary to reason. As a rule, non-theism generally rests on the absence of experience of the existence of the supernatural, not on its irrational character; and this may prove that belief in the supernatural is not derived from experience, but certainly not that it is contrary to reason.

(2) Again, if this be so, we cannot say that morality is without a rational sanction. We have no right to restrict the name of "reason" to the operation of our intellects in safe-guarding our own interest or even that of our generation; and something much more searching than Mr. Kidd's analysis would be required to prove the fundamental fallacy

of all ethical science. As a matter of fact, Mr. Kidd's argument that morality has no ethical sanction really amounts to this only, that it has no utilitarian basis, which is quite a different matter.

(3) But, in truth, there is a more deeply seated fault in the whole argument. Mr. Kidd tries to induce us to believe that the altruism of religion is imported (so to speak) into our reason from without, and that man would be purely selfish but for this external force. He would care only for the present generation. But (we may fairly ask) what man ever yet had to deal with "the present generation"? Men do not succeed one another on the earth, like the phoenixes in Arabia, one generation at a time. A man may not care particularly about his and other men's remote descendants; but he cares for his children. And the world is not peopled by men alone, but by women too: and a preponderating part of the lives of a majority of women is absorbed in care for their children. Religion strengthens this care, but does not create it; and (in spite of Mr. Kidd's frequent allusions to Mrs. Mona Caird's attacks on the folly of self-sacrifice for one's children) the "new woman's" views as to maternal obligation do not vastly affect the world. This force of parental self-sacrifice is a constant force; it is not confined to mankind: it has been going on in the world for countless generations. Is it wonderful if it has ingrained a certain kind of altruism in our nature, and, by its cumulative effects, made Mr. Kidd's views as to the selfishness of reason seem opposed to the whole experience of mankind? It is non-rational in its origin, but so is self-love; and there is no sort of ground for treating one as reasonable and the other not.

(4) Thus religion is not a power warring with our nature, but only with the undue development of one side of our nature. It is eminently social and eminently progressive, by the very necessity of the case; but it could hardly be so, as we have seen, if it were not true. And, we may add, the mere presentation of the idea of the supernatural to man would not ensure his acceptance of it, if it were not in accordance with the facts of his nature. Belief in an unselfish God strengthens unselfishness; but if man had no basis for unselfishness in his nature, he would not believe in an unselfish God. Thus religion is a uniting force, blending all a man's powers, the self-regarding and the altruistic, into a consistent whole; and its reasonableness may thus be further supported from its reconciling man's instincts with one another, and giving (as nothing else does) a common goal to his love of self and love of others.

(5) If we look thus on religion, we must refuse to accept the view that finds in the progress of each nation a kind of life-history, with successive stages of growth and decay, resembling the life-history of an organism. For in truth the only analogy between a plant or animal and a nation consists in the fact that they are organised; and the death of an organism does not depend on the fact that it is organised, but on the nature of its constituents. Nations do die, but they die of disease, not of old age; and there is no natural term of life for a nation as there is for a man. The theory that a nation's belief in its religion, and consequently its vitality, must at a certain stage diminish, depends on the belief that its religion must at some period be overpowered by its reason; and this in its turn depends on the

belief that religion includes altruism and reason does not. This we have seen to be unfounded. This is no reason (for example) why the belief of Englishmen in Christianity need pass away; if it does, it will not be because Christianity has grown too old for the nation or the nation for Christianity.

(6) Now let us apply these facts to Christianity and Western civilisation. The religion of Christ came into the world among men who were prepared, in a manner, for it. It agreed with, strengthened, developed, the altruism that (however unrealised as a general principle) was present in the most sacred parts (humanly speaking) of their lives—conjugal love and family affection. It passed over, along with certain still-abiding elements of Roman civilisation, to tribes that were then overrunning the Roman empire: it came to them inextricably blended with all the system by which Rome had drawn men into the great brotherhood of the citizenship. For I still maintain that what gave ancient Rome her value—what made it an essential thing for the progress of the world that Rome should conquer Carthage and not Carthage Rome—was the fact that Rome was not a mere conqueror, that she fused, blended together, strengthened, and enfranchised her subjects. The work of Rome and of Græco-Phœnician thought had between them so influenced the world that in the life-time of the Apostles the conception of the kingdom of God had already grown into the thought of a world-wide kingdom. We may put it another way. God revealed this kingdom, based (as we have seen) on the unity of His spiritual creation in Christ; but God by these Roman and Græco-Phœnician ideas prepared the way for men's reception of it. From this sprang the development of the Mediæval

Church; and, when this Church was largely broken up and divided, it was not because men had grown tired of or outgrown the social conception of Christianity, but for quite other reasons. It was partly because, in the rise of new nationalities, the Church had not sufficiently provided for the characteristics of their national life. It was partly because, after Imperial Rome had fallen, the shadow of her local autocracy and her degenerate Cæsarism rested on the Church. It was partly because of a vast multitude of causes that resulted in the growth of ethical and doctrinal corruption among the rulers in the Church. It was partly because of the loss, by the Church herself, of the sense of her true functions, resulting in the craving for direct civil power. But, even in the Reformation, there was no general desire to be free from the supremacy of the Divine law or to take from the Church her right of administering it. In England there was as strong a belief in a single Church as ever; in some other countries men separated into hostile bodies, but more because they differed as to what the true Church was than because they had ceased to recognise the existence of the Church as essentially involved in Christianity. So far as the Reformation has contributed to the prosperity of the nations that have accepted it, it has done so, not through sectarianism, but through the persistence, in a purified form, of the conception of the kingdom of God.

Sectarianism has not reached its final form, so we can say little as to its future results. But of one thing we can be certain—it cannot but separate religion from social life. Social life is of necessity united; but it is the nature of sectarianism to divide. For religion to influence the destinies of a nation it must, unless all past history is to count for nothing,

be supreme in national life; but sectarianism is already making it very difficult to treat our public business from a Christian standpoint. And, finally, the greatest power wielded by Christianity in ensuring Western progress has been its continual presentation of a higher law than that of each nation, owned by the great kingdom which we call the Church, and leading men on to a goal of coming happiness, union, and peace. By this it has kept before each nation the thought of its own progress, and has tended to draw all together into brotherhood and common fellowship in the Church. The essential principle of sectarianism is individualism; and there are not wanting signs of the decay of the sense of national life among those who have embraced it. It is hard to believe that a mode of thought which strikes at the root of the social element in both religious and national life can be the form of Christianity that will best help a nation to strength, prosperity, and freedom.

P.S. It is but fair to add that, in an address given in the Jerusalem Chamber, Westminster, which was summarised in a number of the *Guardian* in 1894, Mr. Kidd follows up his contention that altruism has an exclusively religious basis, by predicting that social evolution will follow the lines of historic Christianity; that is, in his view, pre-Reformation theology interpreted in such a modern spirit as will meet rational demands.

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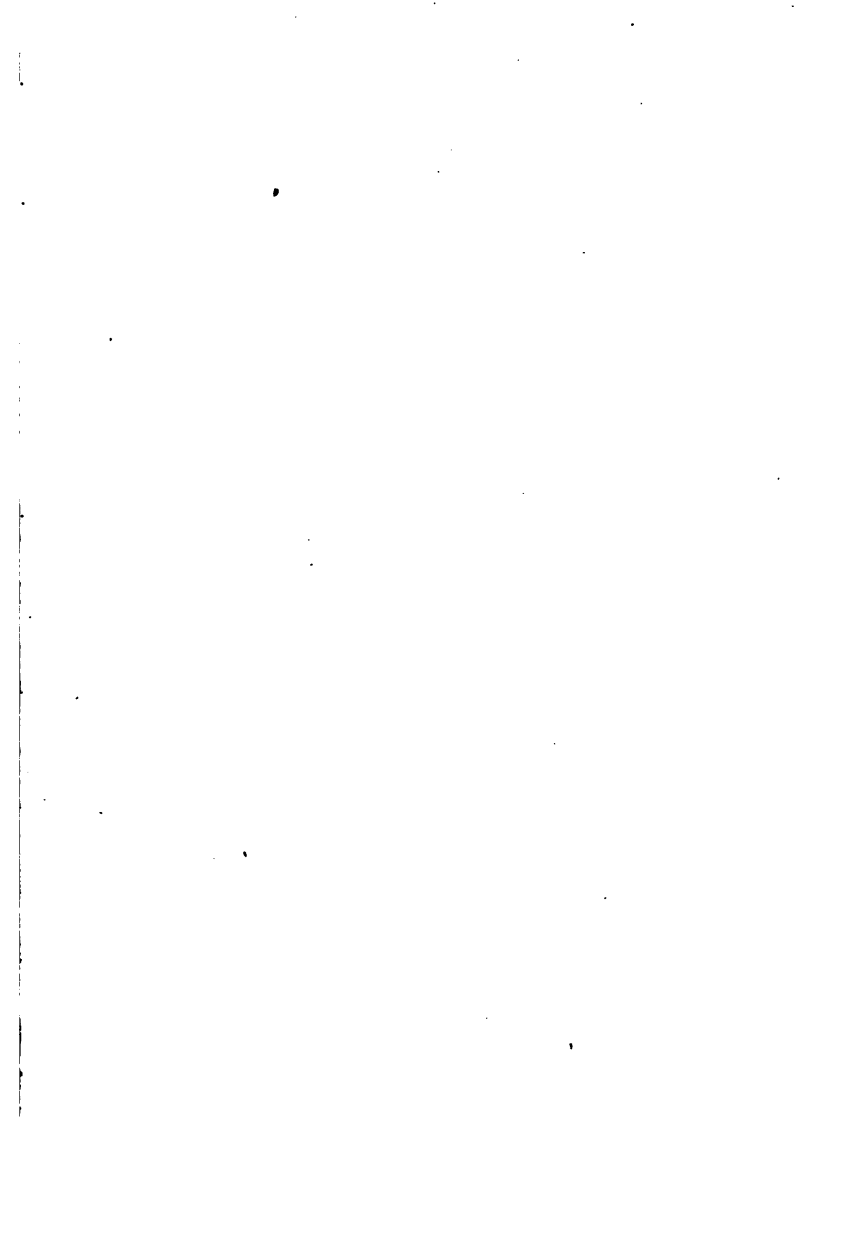
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